From the Author

1500/222 50

THE

NECESSITY *of* RELIGIOUS EDUCATION,

PROVED BY

ARGUMENTS deduced from the SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE of the CORRUPTION of HUMAN NATURE,

WITH AN

INQUIRY into the TRUE MEANING of ST. PETER's POSITION,

That "*Charity ſhall cover the Multitude of Sins.*"

A

SERMON,

PREACHED on SUNDAY, December 22, 1799,

At the PARISH-CHURCH of ST. PAUL,

FOR THE

BENEFIT of the CHARITY-SCHOOLS eſtabliſhed in the CITY of EXETER.

WITH

A Variety of NOTES and ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY JONAS DENNIS, S. C. L.

OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD,

PREBENDARY of CARSWELL, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF EXETER.

"*Being by Nature born in Sin and the Children of Wrath.*" Church Catechiſm.

"*The End of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conſcience, and* "*of* Faith *unfeigned.*" 1 Tim. i. 5.

EXETER: PRINTED AND SOLD BY TREWMAN AND SON;

Sold alſo by RIVINGTONS, London; HANWELL, Oxford; MERRILLS, Cambridge; HAZARD, Bath; COTTLE, Briſtol; LOYCE, Tiverton; CARTHEW, Cullompton; and all other Bookſellers.

*** The Profits of this Publication will be applied to the Promotion of the ſaid benevolent Inſtitution.

15
63
JUL

TO THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

THE MAYOR AND CHAMBER OF EXETER,

IN TESTIMONY OF GRATITUDE

FOR THE APPOINTMENT RECENTLY CONFERRED UPON HIM,

BY THEIR FAVOUR,

THIS DISCOURSE,

PREACHED

FOR THE BENEFIT OF

A BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION

ESTABLISHED IN THE CITY, OVER WHICH THEY PRESIDE,

IS

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR

MOST DUTIFUL

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

JONAS DENNIS.

Exeter, Feb. 10th, 1800.

15
63
JUL

A SERMON.

LUKE, Chap. xviii. Verſe 16.

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT."

AND who would forbid them!—Can any one pretend to call himſelf a Chriſtian (A), and yet refuſe to obey this poſitive command of God our Saviour, who deſireth not the death of any of his ſinful creatures, but willeth that all men ſhould be ſaved, by coming unto the knowledge of the truth? (B)—Without this knowledge, what is man?—Without the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus, every ſon and daughter of Adam—however improved in underſtanding—however reſpectable in character—however exalted in rank—however elevated above the ordinary diſtreſſes, the common calamities, incident to inferior ſtations of life—the high no leſs than the low—the rich no leſs than the poor—

(A) The Capital Letters refer to the General Notes at the End.

poor—the king that ſitteth upon his throne, no leſs than the beggar that lieth on the dunghill, is doubtleſs in the ſight of God, "wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.[a]" Whence, then, is this knowledge to be derived? "Not from "nature, not from natural wiſdom, nor the world's philoſophy (c);" but from the declarations of the divine will, revealed in the ſcriptures of truth, thoſe unerring oracles of the living God. Thence only can we learn the original deſign of our being ſent into this tranſitory—this troubleſome world.—Thence only can we diſcover either the corrupt and helpleſs nature of ourſelves, or the merciful kindneſs of that pure and perfect Being, with whom we have to do.—Thence only can we aſcertain how God commendeth his love towards us, in that when we were yet without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly.—Thence only can we become acquainted with thoſe means of grace, by the ſincere and diligent uſe of which, we ſhall not fail to obtain admittance into that world, where is fulneſs of joy at God's right hand for evermore.—In ſhort, thence only can we acquire that wiſdom which is from above—that ſpiritual knowledge, which is able to make

[a] Rev. iii. 17.

make us wiſe unto ſalvation, through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus.

To evince the indiſpenſable duty of communicating this knowledge to the children of our indigent brethren, through the medium of religious education, (and that is the more immediate object of the preſent diſcourſe) I know no topic, from whence more powerful arguments can poſſibly be deduced, than the ſcriptural doctrine of Original ſin—a doctrine which undoubtedly conſtitutes the very foundation, out of which the whole ſtructure of the Chriſtian religion may juſtly be ſaid to ariſe—a doctrine which, for this reaſon, can neither be too earneſtly inculcated by the preacher, nor be too clearly underſtood by the hearer, of the Goſpel (D).

Original ſin then is, as the ninth article of our church very juſtly defines it, "the fault and corruption of the nature of every "man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, "whereby man is very far (E) gone from original righteouſneſs, "and is of his own nature inclined to evil." So deciſive is the language of our church with reſpect to this important doctrine,

and

and equally deciſive is the uniform tenor of the ſacred volume. For the ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin, and at the ſame time hath revealed the original cauſe of this depravity, namely, the voluntary tranſgreſſion and conſequent puniſhment of our firſt parent (F). By one man, ſin entered into the world, and by his diſobedience many were made ſinners. He who was originally created upright—made after the image of God (G)—faſhioned like unto the Creator in innocence, in purity, in knowledge, in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs—by the violation of a poſitive command of the Almighty, entirely loſt this priſtine dignity—completely changed this excellent nature—became radically corrupt—totally alienated from the love of God—and neceſſarily prone to ſin. Adam having thus fallen from his high eſtate, it became morally impoſſible that his poſterity ſhould *naturally* inherit what he their primogenitor had *juſtly* forfeited.—It became morally impoſſible that out of the loins of one, who by the wilful commiſſion of ſin had rendered his whole nature uniformly corrupt and degenerate, ſhould proceed any other than a corrupt and degenerate race. For "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Accordingly the immediate offspring of Adam were begotten, not in the image and

[b] Job, xiv. 4

and after the likeneſs of God, as their father was originally created, but in the image and after the likeneſs of their fallen—their corrupt—their degenerate—their ſinful parent. For it is recorded, that "Adam begat a ſon in his own likeneſs, after his image."[c]

And let it not preſumptuouſly be thought that theſe awful conſequences of the fall are in the leaſt degree derogatory to the juſtice of God, and on that account are only imaginary, and do not in reality exiſt. Conſider, whether, even in human affairs, a ſimilar line of procedure may not, in ſome inſtances, be traced. Behold the traitor,—convicted before a tribunal of his fellow-creatures of one of the moſt flagrant crimes which can be committed by man in a ſtate of civilized ſociety—The puniſhment juſtly inflicted by the offended laws of his country, not only affects the criminal *himſelf* in the forfeiture of life, but even extends to his remoteſt *poſterity* in the deprivation of civil honours—in the degradation of rank, in the loſs of title, in the confiſcation of property. Thus, even according to man's own ideas of equity, it is not deemed unjuſt that in the preſent world (H) the ſon ſhould bear the iniquity of the father, and that the ſins of the

[c] Gen. v. 3.

fathers ſhould be viſited upon the children that are yet unborn—upon the generations that are yet for to come.

Who, then, art thou, O arrogant man, that preſumeſt to arraign the juſtice of thy Creator, and in the pride of thy heart dareſt to reply againſt God?—Whoever thou be, reſt aſſured, as long as thou continueſt unconvinced that the fatal conſequences of the fall are juſtly inflicted by God, and are ſenſibly experienced by man, in the total corruption of human nature—with all thy boaſted, but vain pretenſions to *rational* religion (I), thou art not better than an infidel, and ſhouldſt thou die unconverted, wilt moſt aſſuredly receive an infidel's reward.

But in contemplating the puniſhment judicially inflicted by God, and naturally incurred by all mankind, in conſequence of the tranſgreſſion of Adam, who was the fœderal head (K) the repreſentative of all his deſcendants, it concerns us, not ſo much to comprehend the *juſtice* of this puniſhment, as to be convinced of its *reality:* ſince if it be real it muſt *neceſſarily* be juſt, for "ſhall not "the Judge of all the earth do right?"[d] Let us then inquire into its

[d] Gen. xviii. 25.

its actual exiſtence.—It will bear inveſtigation.—Let us therefore examine the fact.—I will appeal to the teſtimony of your own experience—And let every one who now hears me, whether young or old, whether male or female, lay his hand upon his heart—let him deliberate—let him ponder—and conſider—and ſearch—and examine his own conſcience—and then, let him ſolemnly anſwer to himſelf, as he ſtands here in the preſence of an all-ſeeing God, whether he has never perceived, what the Apoſtle appropriately terms, "a law in his members warring "againſt the law of his mind, and bringing him into ſubjection "to the law of ſin.[e]"—Let him diligently inquire of himſelf, whether under the influence of example, of temptation, or of paſſion, he has never acted contrary to his own principles—whether he has never ſinned againſt light and knowledge—whether he has never broken his own vows and reſolutions—whether he does not poſſeſs a ſecret inclination to "walk not by "faith, but by ſight.[f]"—Let him alſo ſeriouſly aſk himſelf, whether he does not feel a ſtrong propenſity to "ſet his affections "not on things above, but on things on the earth[g]"—to be immerſed in temporal purſuits, ſo as to pay little regard to ſpiritual

 concerns

[e] Rom. vii. 23. [f] 2 Cor. v. 7. [g] Col. iii. 2.

concerns—to be enſnared by the cares, and riches, and pleaſures of this periſhable life, ſo as to have no earneſt deſire after thoſe attainments of the ſoul, which alone can qualify him for the enjoyments of that life which is to laſt for ever.

Indeed every one who habituates himſelf ſeriouſly to reflect upon what paſſes daily within his own breaſt, muſt be conſcious of this natural proneneſs to ſin, a few diſcriminating features of which I have attempted faintly to delineate. In different characters it may vary in appearance, and under different circumſtances it may vary in degree, but in its ſpecific nature this corrupt principle is always the ſame, and exerts an *univerſal*, though *varied*, influence over the whole human race (L). Indeed the *general* exiſtence of this corruption was acknowledged by the Grecian Sage, who admitted that the majority of mankind were wicked (M). But it requires no ſmall ſhare of credulity to believe that even this *general* prevalence of human depravity, which, by the declaration of an unenlightened heathen was allowed to exiſt, can *originate* in cauſes accidental or adventitious—in the force of example—in the ſtrength of temptation—or in the power of paſſion: ſince the effect is frequently produced at times when it is impoſ-

ſible

ſible that ſuch cauſes can operate in the ſmalleſt degree. For human depravity will often betray itſelf in oppoſition to the beſt example, in the abſence of temptation, and in the cooleſt moments of reaſon. Of paſſion, it is obvious to remark, that it exerts itſelf in ſudden and temporary emotions only; therefore it cannot be paſſion, which of itſelf actuates the conduct of many, whoſe whole lives diſplay nothing but one, uniform, continued, uninterrupted courſe of folly and of ſin. And even in others of a more decent character, who yet are equally uninfluenced by a religious principle, or, in other words, who are not in a ſtate of grace, even in ſuch, it is not difficult to trace their faireſt and moſt ſpecious actions to impure and unworthy motives (M)—to vanity—to oſtentation—to ambition—to the love of popularity—to the love of ſelf—or to any motive, except that which alone is pure and acceptable—a deſire to promote the glory of God.

In order, however, that we may not deceive our own hearts—that we may not labour under doubt and perplexity—or be bewildered in the intricate mazes of uncertain ſpeculation and of diſputable hypotheſis, concerning this hereditary corruption of our nature, the holy Scriptures deſcribe it with the minuteſt preciſion.

They

They aſſert that ſo far from being *caſual* or *fortuitous*, this corruption is *innate* and *inherent* in us. Thus, David, convinced by ſelf-experience of the natural depravity of the human race, burſts out into this humiliating confeſſion: "Behold I was *ſhapen* "in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother *conceive* me.[h]" And Job with his uſual ſublimity of interrogation, aſks: "What is man "that he ſhould be clean, or he that is *born* of a woman, that he "ſhould be righteous? Behold, the heavens are not clean in his "ſight! How much more abominable and filthy is man, who "drinketh iniquity like water?[i]"—The Scriptures aſſert that ſo far from being *partial*, or *limited* to any particular individuals, this corruption is *univerſal*, and *extended* to all mankind. Thus the Almighty is repreſented as "looking down from heaven upon the "children of men, to ſee if there were *any* that would underſtand "and ſeek after God. But they are *all* gone out of the way; "they are *altogether* become abominable: there is *none* that doeth "good, no, not *one*[k]"—Solomon declares that "there is not a "juſt man *upon earth*, that doeth good and ſinneth not[l]"—Saint James ſays expreſſly that "in many things we offend *all*[m]"—Saint John aſſures us that "if we ſay that we have *no* ſin, we deceive "ourſelves,

[h] Pſ. li. 5. [i] Job, xv. 14, 15, 16. [k] Pſ. liii. 2, 3. [l] Eccleſ. vii. 20. [m] James, iii. 2.

"ourſelves, and the truth is not in us. If we ſay that we have "*not* ſinned, we make God a liar, and his word is not in us"[n]— The Scriptures aſſert that, ſo far from being a *ſuperficial* infection, this corruption is a *radical* diſeaſe. Thus the Apoſtle Saint Paul, lamenting the natural propenſity to ſin, againſt which he conſtantly ſtruggled, ſays, "I know that in me, that is, in my *fleſh* dwelleth "*no* good thing."[o] And deſcribing the contraſt between thoſe who continue carnally-minded, and thoſe who are become ſpiritually-minded, he declares poſitively that "they that are in the "*fleſh*, can *not* pleaſe God."[p]—The Scriptures aſſert that ſo far from enfeebling the faculties of the *mind* only, this corruption perverts the affections of the *heart* alſo. Thus Solomon tells us that "fooliſhneſs is bound up in the *heart* of a child."[q] The prophet Jeremiah aſſures us that "the *heart* is deceitful above all things, "and deſperately wicked."[r] Our Saviour informs us that "out "of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, forni- "cations, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies.[s]" And in the eighth chapter of Geneſis, God does in his own perſon expreſſly declare, that "the imagination of man's *heart* is evil from his youth."[t]

Of

n 1 John, i. 8, 10. o Rom. vii. 18. p Rom. viii. 8. q Prov. xxii. 15.
r Jer. xvii. 9. s Mat. xv. 19. t Gen. viii. 21.

Of this declaration it is particularly important to obſerve, that it was made immediately after the flood, at a time when the whole world conſiſted of eight perſons only, and that theſe very perſons do not appear to have been remarkably degenerate. On the contrary, of one of them it is recorded, that he was not only a preacher of righteouſneſs to others, but was alſo himſelf righteous before God—that he "was a juſt man, and perfect in his gene-"rations, and that he walked with God."[u] Hence it is by no means unreaſonable to conclude, that, in conſideration of his comparative renovation of heart and ſincere obedience to the divine will, (expreſſed in the language of ſcripture by the terms uprightneſs, innocence, purity, integrity, holineſs, righteouſneſs, juſtice, perfection,) he and his family were preſerved from deſtruction, whilſt, on account of their conſummate depravity, the reſt of mankind were cut off from the face of the earth. Notwithſtanding which, Noah was unqueſtionably one of thoſe, whoſe hearts were declared to be evil from their youth, ſince the declaration is applied to man *univerſally*, without any exception whatever, and is preciſely the ſame as that made *antecedently* to the awful cataſtrophe of the deluge. Viewed in this light, the ſingle paſſage

[u] Gen. vi. 9.

paſſage in queſtion affords of itſelf to every unprejudiced mind, ample demonſtration of the truth of the doctrine which I am endeavouring to eſtabliſh.—The Scriptures aſſert moreover that, ſo far from furniſhing us with any *excuſe* for our ſpiritual infirmities, or with any *extenuation* of our actual ſins, this corruption precludes all hope of juſtification before God by any works that we can perform, and provokes moſt juſtly God's *wrath* and *indignation* againſt us. Thus, David, impreſſed with the firm conviction of this important truth, and deeply ſenſible of the neceſſity of ſelf-abaſement and ſelf-condemnation, offers up this earneſt ſupplication to the divine Majeſty: "Enter not into judgment with thy ſer-"vant, O Lord, for in thy ſight ſhall *no man living be juſtified.*[w]" And Saint Paul, ſpeaking to his Epheſian converts reſpecting their former converſation, ſays: "We were by nature children of "*wrath.*[x]"

In ſhort, to complete this humiliating account of our fallen and ſinful nature, the Scriptures aſſert that, ſo far from the *poſſibility* of being ſubdued by our own *unaſſiſted ſtrength*, this corruption renders us entirely *helpleſs*, and *incapacitates* us from making by

 our

[w] Pſ. cxliii. 2. [x] Eph. ii. 3.

our own natural power any ſucceſsful efforts whatever. Thus the Apoſtle of the Gentiles declares that naturally we are unable not barely to perform a good *action*, but even to conceive a good *thought*: for he ſays plainly, that "we are not ſufficient of ourſelves to "*think* any thing as of ourſelves,[y]" and that "the natural man "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fool-"iſhneſs unto him, neither can he *know* them.[z]"—And yet, however the religious formaliſt may deſpiſe the doctrine of *regeneration*—however the nominal Chriſtian may revile the advocate for *converſion*—our gracious Redeemer declares, in the ſtrongeſt and moſt unequivocal terms, that unleſs this corruption be overcome—unleſs the mind be *renewed*—unleſs the heart be *transformed*—it is impoſſible that we can be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. For in reply to the queſtion put to him by Nicodemus, Jeſus anſwered, "Verily, "Verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be *born again*, he can *not* enter into the kingdom of God.[a]" And on another occaſion he ſpoke in language equally plain and deciſive: "Verily, I ſay "unto you, except ye be *converted* and become as little children, "ye ſhall *not* enter into the kingdom of heaven.[b]"

Such

y 2 Cor. iii. 5. z 1 Cor. ii. 14. a John, iii. 3. b Mat. xviii. 3.

Such is the natural ſtate of fallen man, as deſcribed in the ſacred volume—"a being ſhapen in iniquity[c]"—"a child of wrath[d]"—"a ſervant of ſin[e]"—"a debtor to the fleſh[f]"—"in bondage to "the world[g]"—"under the power of Satan[h]"—"in enmity againſt "God"—"not ſubject to the law of God"—"unable to pleaſe "God.[i]"

"What!" exclaims the aſtoniſhed advocate for the dignity of human nature, and juſtification by ſelf-righteouſneſs: "Would you "drive us to deſpair?—You maintain, that the corruption of our "nature expoſes us to the wrath of God, and yet that we do not "poſſeſs power to ſubdue it!" To ſuch an objector, although I am free to confeſs, that his ſtatement does in reality contain the ſum and ſubſtance of this eſſential doctrine of our church, which I have undertaken to defend, yet I moſt decidedly refuſe to admit the inference which he deduces from it, becauſe I heſitate not to affirm that ſuch an inference is palpably unjuſt, and ariſes from a partial and imperfect view of the ſubject. God forbid that the miniſter of an all-merciful Saviour ſhould drive any of his fellow-

 creatures

[c] Pſ. li. 5. [d] Eph. ii. 3. [e] John, viii. 34. [f] Rom. viii. 12. [g] Gal. iv. 3.
[h] Acts, xxvi. 18. [i] James, iv. 4.

creatures to deſpair! For "as I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have "no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn "from his way, and live.[k]" If indeed no atonement had been made for the ſins of the whole world—if there were no way for the ranſomed to paſs over—if there were no balm in Gilead, and no phyſician there—if we had it not in our power to lay hold on one that is mighty to ſave, on whoſe propitiation we can rely with confidence, and in whoſe righteouſneſs we can make our boaſt—then, moſt aſſuredly, to teach that the innate corruption of our nature renders us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and that by our own ſtrength we are unable to overcome this corruption, would be a doctrine calculated to produce deſpair. But ſince we know that our Redeemer liveth—ſince we know that he was offered a ſacrifice upon the croſs for the expreſs purpoſe of procuring for us the means of deliverance from the *dominion* of ſin here, no leſs than for that of obtaining redemption from the *puniſhment* of it hereafter, the doctrine of Original ſin is not calculated to fill the mind with gloomy deſperation (N), but it is calculated to fit and prepare the heart for accepting, with humility, with gratitude, and joy, this merciful invitation of a crucified Saviour: "Come "unto

[k] Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

"unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will "give you reſt.[l]" For we muſt become deeply ſenſible of the danger of our ſouls, as long as they remain in their natural ſtate, before we can thoroughly comprehend either the abſolute *neceſſity*, or the infinite *bleſſing* of a Redeemer.—Until we are firmly perſuaded not only of the *ſinfulneſs*, but alſo of the *helpleſſneſs* of our fallen nature—until we are brought to a firm conviction of what the Apoſtle emphatically denominates the "exceeding ſinfulneſs "of ſin[m]"—until we feel ourſelves, to uſe the energetic language of our church, "tied and bound with the chain of our ſins"—it is altogether impoſſible that we can have a lively faith in God's mercy through Chriſt, with a thankful remembrance of his death, who, when we were yet in a ſtate of condemnation, paid that ranſom, whereby alone we obtain remiſſion of our ſins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven.—Unleſs we admit that the whole head is ſick—that the whole heart is faint—that, from the ſole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs—we ſhall never be led earneſtly to apply for relief to that great Phyſician of ſouls, who himſelf took our infirmities, and bore our ſickneſſes.—Unleſs we perceive that the eyes of our underſtandings are blinded

in

[l] Mat. xi. 28. [m] Rom. vii. 13.

in regard to ſuch objects as are *ſpiritual*, and that the affections of our hearts are enſlaved to ſuch objects as are *ſenſible*—we ſhall never be induced, with ſincere repentance and true faith, to ſupplicate aid, or with unfeigned humility to implore deliverance from that myſterious and incomprehenſible Being, who, as on the feſtival we are about to celebrate, took upon himſelf our nature, in order that he might open the blind eyes, that he might bring out the priſoners from the priſon, and them that ſit in darkneſs, out of the priſon-houſe.—Unleſs we believe—unleſs we know—unleſs we feel that we are naturally under the curſe of the law, we ſhall never fully perceive the love of God, who, as Saint John plainly declares, "laid down his life for us;[n]" and thereby, to uſe the language of another inſpired Apoſtle, "hath redeemed us "from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.[o]"

Unto "God, who thus was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf,[p]" are we commanded to look, not as unto a *deliverer* and *redeemer* only, but as unto a *lawgiver* and *ſanctifier* alſo: for he came "not to deſtroy the law but to fulfil.[q]" And although by the advent of the Meſſiah, the *ritual* law—*temporary* and *typical* in

[n] 1 John, iii. 16. [o] Gal. iii. 13. [p] 2 Cor. v. 19. [q] Mat. v. 17.

in its nature—the ſhadow of good things to come, was undoubtedly abrogated; yet the *moral* law—*univerſal* and *eternal* in its obligation—was thereby rendered more plain—more extenſive—more binding. Since, when the Son of God died to ſave us, upon our embracing the terms of the Goſpel-covenant, from the puniſhment incurred by *actual* as well as by *original* ſin, he did not intend to emancipate us from obedience to the divine commands, or to procure a licence for our continuing in ſin. On the contrary he "gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, "and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good "works.[r]" "Accordingly we are required to fulfil the law of "Chriſt,[s]" who, as Saint Paul in his Epiſtle to the Hebrews expreſſes this important truth, "became the Author of eternal ſalva-"tion unto all them that obey him.[t]" In his firſt Epiſtle to Timothy, the Apoſtle again aſſerts this very ſame propoſition, but adopts an expreſſion ſomewhat different. He there ſays: "We "truſt in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, ſpecially "of thoſe that believe.[u]" In each of theſe paſſages it is evidently the deſign of the inſpired writer to point out the conditions of man's acceptance with God: for which purpoſe in the former he uſes

[r] Tit. ii. 14. [s] Gal. vi. 2. [t] Heb. v. 9. [u] 1 Tim. iv. 10.

uſes the term *obey*, in the latter the term *believe*. Now except it be admitted that belief or faith, and obedience or works, though diſtinct and apparently oppoſite terms, do yet in theſe, and in many other inſtances, convey preciſely the ſame meaning, it muſt neceſſarily follow that, not only different paſſages of ſcripture, but even different paſſages of the ſame Apoſtle, contradict one another, which is a ſuppoſition totally inadmiſſible. But it appears, from other parts of Saint Paul's Epiſtles, that he frequently means by *faith*, ſuch faith as *neceſſarily* produces *obedience*, and by *obedience*, ſuch obedience as *neceſſarily* ſprings from *faith*; ſince, like St. James, he has himſelf intimated that they are inſeparable. For, beſides a variety of other proofs which might readily be advanced in ſupport of this poſition, he particularly charges him, whom by the authority and commiſſion received from Chriſt, he had ordained to the miniſtry, and had conſecrated Biſhop of Epheſus to "hold faith and a good conſcience, which," he adds, "ſome, having put away, concerning faith, have made ſhip-"wreck."[w] By admitting this ſolution of the ſeeming difficulty—a ſolution, which naturally ariſes from the due conſideration of this and many other paſſages of ſimilar import—the long-conteſted queſtion

[w] 1 Tim. i. 19.

queſtion concerning juſtification by faith or by works, is at once ſettled and determined. And indeed this is the very light in which our Church views the ſubject. For while, in conformity to the ſcriptural doctrine of juſtification, our eleventh article maintains that "we are accounted righteous before God, only "for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt by *faith*, and "not for our own works or deſervings:" our twelfth article does at the ſame time declare that "good works which are the "fruits of faith, do ſpring out neceſſarily (o) of a true and lively "faith, inſomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently "known, as a tree diſcerned by the fruit." So that not only from the compariſon of parallel paſſages, but alſo from the decided opinion of thoſe ſound and orthodox divines who framed our articles, it is evident that on the one hand, *faith* is neither *ſincere* nor *ſaving*, except it produce obedience; and that on the other, *obedience* is neither *pure* nor *acceptable*, except it ſpring from faith. Conſequently the words *believe* and *obey*, when they expreſs the conditions of man's acceptance with God, are uſed indiſcriminately, and the one implies the other: therefore in the two paſſages in queſtion, they muſt certainly be accounted as no other than ſynonimous terms; and thus the propoſition aſſerted in each of

theſe paſſages is clearly proved to be one and the ſame. But here it may be aſked, if we are naturally corrupt and prone to ſin, how can we poſſibly obtain that faith, which neceſſarily produces ſuch obedience, as can be in any degree pleaſing and acceptable unto that perfect and omniſcient Being, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Bleſſed be God! "He has promiſed to render "us equal to his ſervice.—He beſtows not only the precept, but "the power.—He does what the great poet of Ethics lamented "that reaſon could not do—He gives us arms as well as rules."

It was one grand object of the Redeemer's ſacrifice to procure the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, (P) in order not only to propagate with ſucceſs the Chriſtian faith, but alſo to enable every ſincere follower of that faith, to overcome the corrupt affections of his nature, and to acquire thoſe diſpoſitions of righteouſneſs and true holineſs, which alone can qualify his ſoul for the enjoyment of future bliſs. And this unſpeakable gift, which, in an abundant and extraordinary meaſure, was beſtowed on the Apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians, and which, in a leſſer and more ordinary degree, is likewiſe promiſed to *all that are afar off*, even unto the end of the world, is ſufficient to enable us to become regenerate and renewed

in

in the ſpirit of our minds. Through the operation of this divine influence we are called out of darkneſs into the marvellous light of the Goſpel. If we "*grieve* not[x]"—if we "*reſiſt* not[y]"—if we "*quench* not[z]" the ſpirit—if we *ſtir up* the gift of God that is in us—if we *obey* his ſuggeſtions—if we *follow* his motions—we then receive the ſpirit of adoption,[a] and are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God[b]—and if children, then are we heirs—heirs of God—and joint-heirs with Chriſt.[c]

Our Saviour indeed declares that "without him we *can do* "*nothing*;[d]" but Saint Paul, ſpeaking from experience no leſs than from faith, ſays, with well grounded confidence, "I *can do* "*all things* through Chriſt, which ſtrengtheneth me:[e]" and to the prayer, repeatedly offered up by him in the hour of temptation, he received from the Lord this conſolatory anſwer: "My "grace is ſufficient for thee.[f]" Yet with a view to preſerve us humble, and to prevent us from becoming high-minded, the Scriptures inform us, that as long as we remain in this corporeal

 tabernacle,

[x] Eph. iv. 30. [y] Acts, vii. 51. [z] 1 Theſ. v. 19. [a] Rom. viii. 15. [b] Rom. viii. 21. [c] Rom. viii. 17. [d] John, xv. 5. [e] Phil. iv. 13. [f] 2 Cor. xii. 19.

tabernacle, we ſhall continue liable to be interrupted in our progreſs towards perfection, not only by the remaining indwelling of ſin, but likewiſe by the aſſaults of our ſpiritual "adverſary, the "Devil, who, as a roaring lion, walketh about ſeeking whom he "may devour.[g]" For regeneration (Q), although it muſt originally begin and gradually advance in this life, will not become perfect and complete, until that eventful period ſhall arrive, which with peculiar emphaſis is called "*the regeneration*, when the ſon "of man ſhall ſit in the throne of his glory.[h]" That we may be "renewed in the ſpirit of our minds[i]"—that we may attain unto that "holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord[k]"—that thus we may be prepared againſt that awful—that terrible day—we are commanded continually to draw ſupplies of living water from the ſpiritual fountain (R) which is opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs. "Seeing that we have a great high-prieſt, that is "paſſed into the heavens, Jeſus the Son of God—an high-prieſt "which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having "himſelf been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without "ſin—therefore we are exhorted to come boldly unto the throne "of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help "in

g 1 Peter, v. 8. h Mat. xix. 28. i Eph. iv. 23. k Heb. xii. 14.

" in time of need.[l]" " By grace are we ſaved through faith[m]"—" faith cometh by hearing—and hearing by the word of God.[n]" This word of God is contained in a book, now ſeldom peruſed (s) by the faſhionable part of mankind, and the very exiſtence of which would nearly be forgotten, were it not ſtill read in our forſaken and almoſt empty churches (T)—and this book is no other than the Bible:—a book accounted dull by the liberal—the ſpirited—the good-hearted ſons of licentiouſneſs:—eſteemed unintereſting by the novel-reading—the ſober-minded—the innocent daughters of diſſipation: (U)—conſidered merely as an obſolete ſtatute-book, by them and by all, whoſe views—whoſe ſchemes—whoſe habits—whoſe maxims—whoſe wiſhes—whoſe deſires—whoſe prejudices—whoſe principles uniformly combine in immediate oppoſition to—in open defiance of—that " law of the Lord, which is an un-" defiled law, converting the ſoul.[o]" Inſtead of ſtriving faithfully to keep the promiſe, and ſincerely to perform the vow made by ſponſors (w), in their name, at admiſſion into the church of Chriſt—a ſolemn engagement deliberately undertaken in their own perſons at confirmation (x), that rite through the voluntary neglect of which infant-baptiſm is not only rendered incomplete, but is even virtually

[l] Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16. [m] Eph. ii. 8. [n] Rom. x. 17. [o] Pſ. xix. 7.

virtually annulled—a ſolemn engagement again renewed at every participation of the holy euchariſt—inſtead of ſtriving through the aid of divine grace, conſcientiouſly to fulfil this engagement—the majority of thoſe, who profeſs and call themſelves Chriſtians, think—ſpeak—and act, preciſely in the ſame manner, as they would have thought—and ſpoken—and acted, if, from their infancy, they had repeatedly been dedicated to the faithful ſervice—*not* of *God* the king of heaven—*but* of *Satan* the prince of this world. Their life runs directly *counter* to their baptiſmal vow. So far from *renouncing the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh*:—they *reſiſt not* the devil, *but practiſe* his works:—they *avoid not* pomp, *but entirely give themſelves up* unto vanity:—they *crucify not* the fleſh with the affections and luſts, *but pamper* and *ſtimulate* and *gratify* every evil propenſity of their nature, to as great a degree as they poſſibly can, *conſiſtently* with the preſervation of external decency, and the good opinion of the world—that world which is *their* God. So far from *believing all* the articles of the Chriſtian faith:—they are as *totally unconcerned about*—I had almoſt ſaid, as *profoundly ignorant of*—the peculiar doctrines of this faith, as if they were deprived of the uſe of the ſcriptures by

Popiſh

Popiſh tyranny, or were precluded from attendance on public worſhip by Gallic infidelity. So far from *keeping* God's holy will and commandments, and walking in the ſame all the days of their life:—they uniformly frame their conduct, not by the precepts of religion, but by, I know not what, imaginary and ridiculous laws of honor—of gentility—of faſhion, implicitly receiving as doctrines, and religiouſly obeying as rules of life, the arbitrary commandments of men. Such is the conduct of the *generality* of the world. They bear the name of Chriſtians:—they lead the life of infidels. It requires, however, no great depth of penetration to diſcover what is the grand ſource of all this nominal—this formal—this phariſaical religion—this "holding the truth in unrighteouſneſs.[p]" The reaſon is evidently this: the conduct of the Bereans is not followed:—they "*ſearched the ſcriptures* daily.[q]" The exhortation of the Redeemer is diſregarded, his words are, "*Search the "ſcriptures*, for in them ye *think* ye have *eternal life*, and they are "they which teſtify of *me*,[r]"

From the general outline of the Chriſtian diſpenſation, which I have now ſtated, I truſt I have incontrovertibly eſtabliſhed that eſſential

[p] Rom. i. 18. [q] Acts, xvii. 11. [r] John, v. 39.

eſſential doctrine, the corruption of human nature, called by our church original ſin: and, by the arguments naturally ariſing out of this doctrine, have proved, not only the abſolute neceſſity of ſearching the Scriptures, but likewiſe the dreadful conſequences, which even to perſons in the middle and higher ſtations of life, uſually reſult from neglect of this duty. If then, you my brethren, are fully convinced that all men are *by nature born in ſin and the children of wrath*—if you are convinced that, ſo ſituated, they ſtand in need of thoſe means, which are preſcribed by the appointment of God for the ſanctification of this corrupt nature, through "the "waſhing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.[s]"—if you are convinced that "the Holy Scriptures are able to make "men wiſe unto ſalvation, through faith which is in Chriſt "Jeſus:[t]"—then indeed I need not add another argument to prevail upon you cheerfully to comply with the exhortation in the text: *Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not.*

But before I conclude a diſcourſe on ſuch an occaſion as the preſent, I can not refrain from cautioning you againſt a moſt erroneous motive to beneficence, which I fear is exceedingly prevalent at this

[s] Titus, iii. 5. [t] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

this day. A notion ſeems to be very generally entertained, even by ſome, who ſtill would feel themſelves extremely hurt at the idea of being ſuſpected of infidelity (Y), that the exerciſe of charity, eſpecially in the inſtance of alms-giving, will make amends for the commiſſion of ſin, and will ſerve as a ſort of ſponge, to wipe out thoſe ſpots in their lives, which the Goſpel declares that the blood of Chriſt alone can expiate. In ſupport of this horrible conceit (z), Scripture is ſometimes produced, particularly that paſſage of Saint Peter's firſt Epiſtle, in which this Apoſtle predicates of charity, that it ſhall "*cover the multitude of ſins.*[u]" Never was the true meaning of any one text in all the ſacred volume, more *ſhamefully* perverted, as evidently appears by comparing it with the twelfth verſe of the tenth chapter of Proverbs, to which a reference is made in the margin of our bibles, and by all the moſt judicious commentators (AA). The verſe runs thus, *hatred ſtirreth up ſtrife, but love covereth all ſin.* Now the propoſition contained in the latter part of this verſe, is preciſely parallel to that aſſerted in the paſſage in queſtion, love being ſynonimous with charity, and only another tranſlation of one and the ſame word. The true ſenſe then of the expreſſion *covering ſin*, which

[u] 1 Peter, iv. 8.

is deſcribed as an effect produced by the operation of love, may eaſily be collected from conſidering the nature of that effect, which, in the former part of the ſame verſe, is attributed to the oppoſite quality, hatred, namely, ſtirring up ſtrife. By ſtirring up ſtrife can only be meant, either contentiouſly to provoke another to commit ſin, or unneceſſarily to expoſe another who has committed ſin: for theſe two are the only interpretations, which can fairly be given to this plain and eaſy phraſe. Therefore covering being put in oppoſition to ſtirring up, which is thus ſhewn to ſignify either provoking or expoſing, muſt neceſſarily have the contrary ſignification, that of preventing or concealing. If then by prevention and concealment love covers ſin, it muſt follow, that this is the way in which charity covers it alſo: ſince it has been ſhewn that charity and love are one and the ſame thing. And in truth this explanation of the term *covering*, applied to charity, perfectly coincides with two particular characteriſtics of that Chriſtian grace, which are mentioned by Saint Paul. For as charity is "*not itſelf "eaſily provoked*,[w]" neither will it contentiouſly provoke another to commit ſin, but will endeavour to prevent him: and as charity "*rejoiceth not itſelf in iniquity*,[x]" neither will it rejoice in expoſing unneceſſarily,

[w] 1 Cor. xiii. 5. [x] 1 Cor xiii. 6.

unneceſſarily, the iniquity of another, but will endeavour to conceal it. In this ſenſe, and in no other can it be ſaid that charity ſhall cover the multitude of ſins—nay, that it does more, that it covereth all ſin. And what, may we not now aſk, is become of the proof, ſuppoſed to ariſe from this paſſage of Saint Peter, in ſupport of the abſurd idea, that the exerciſe of charity will make amends for the commiſſion of ſin, by covering or hiding it from the wrath of God? If this were true, man would then become a Saviour to himſelf, and, in direct contradiction to the doctrine of the Goſpel, would be juſtified by works of righteouſneſs, which he could himſelf perform, and not by a lively faith in God's mercy through Chriſt.

But while I endeavour to guard you againſt being actuated by an erroneous motive, in the exerciſe of charity, let me exhort you to practiſe this duty in all its branches, upon the true Chriſtian motive—that motive, which as I have already obſerved, is alone pure and acceptable—*a deſire to promote the glory of God.* Let me alſo remind you, that mere *benevolence* or *humanity* does not neceſſarily conſtitute Chriſtian *love* or *charity.* They differ in their nature, in their cauſe, and in their effects. The one is a heathen

virtue:—the other a Chriſtian grace.—The one ariſes from a ſelfiſh deſire of removing from our own breaſt that pain, which is occaſioned by the ſight of diſtreſs;—the other ariſes "out of a "pure heart, and of a good conſcience, and of faith unfeigned."[y]—The one is therefore ſolicitous to relieve only the wants of the body, thoſe temporal diſtreſſes, which are ſeen:—the other enlarges its ſphere of action, by endeavouring to alleviate alſo the wants of the ſoul, thoſe ſpiritual diſtreſſes, which are not ſeen. Mere *benevolence* may accidentally be felt by a *Socinian*, a *Deiſt*, or an *Atheiſt*:—*true charity* can be experienced by no man upon earth, who is not a *ſincere Chriſtian*, becauſe it ariſes from *faith unfeigned*, and he who poſſeſſes not faith unfeigned, can by no means be accounted a *ſincere Chriſtian*.

Let me not, however, from theſe obſervations, be thought deſirous of depreciating human benevolence:—My object is to cleanſe and purify its ſource—to exalt and ennoble its nature—and thus to enhance its intrinſic value.—My object is from a principle of pagan ethics to change it into a principle of religious duty.—My object is to advance it from the ſervice of the heathen moraliſts

[y] 1 Tim. i. 5.

moraliſts—of Seneca—of Epictetus—of Antoninus—and to enliſt it under the banners of Chriſt, "the captain of our ſalvation,[z]" "the "author and finiſher of our faith.[a]" By this means alone can I hope to obtain ſucceſs in the cauſe I now plead, for moraliſts are *occaſionally* humane—Chriſtians are *habitually* tender-hearted. By this means alone can I hope to ſtimulate you to exerciſe genuine benevolence, when, after having endeavoured to affect your hearts as Chriſtians, I now make one appeal to your feelings as men. Let me then call upon you to contemplate for a moment the dreadful conſequences which uſually reſult from the corruption of human nature, when this corruption is not reſtrained by the operation of a religious principle, conveyed into the mind through the channel of early inſtruction. Of all the various characters among the lower orders of ſociety, in which theſe conſequences are moſt ſtrongly diſplayed, there is one, which is far more melancholy—far more diſtreſſing than it is in the power of the tongue to deſcribe, or of the imagination to conceive. If any object be in the ſmalleſt degree calculated to excite, in every feeling breaſt, the livelieſt emotions of ſympathy and woe, it is—the wretched—the miſerable—the poor—the helpleſs—the friendleſs

[z] Heb. ii. 10. [a] Heb. xii. 3.

leſs—the comfortleſs—the forlorn—the deſpiſed—the outcaſt—proſtitute. Behold her deſerted by her vile ſeducer—turning from the paths of life—"forſaking the guide of her youth—for-"getting the covenant of her God[b]"—ſacrificing upon the altar of Satan every hope—every comfort—every thing dear and valuable to human exiſtence—reputation—honor—virtue—innocence—peace—health—life—and, awful thought! that which is infinitely more precious than life itſelf—an immortal ſoul.—View her—running the mad, but ſhort career of ſin, and, like her maſter, the Devil, tempting others to become partakers of her evil deeds—boaſting of her numerous victims, and glorying in her ſhame—feeling the miſery of her condition, and knowing not how to eſcape—oppreſſed with the bitter upbraidings of conſcience, and ſtifling her pain by adding drunkenneſs to the black catalogue of ſins—labouring under complicated diſeaſe, the natural conſequence of her crimes, and at laſt, expiring in agony, in horror, and deſpair. In the anguiſh of her ſoul, ſhe ſeems to "look for ſome "to have pity on her—but there is no one—neither finds ſhe any "to comfort her.[c]" And, poor creature! whither can ſhe look for comfort?—To the world?—The world deſpiſes her.—To her acquaintance?

[b] Prov. ii. 17. [c] Pſ. lxix. 20.

acquaintance?—Her acquaintance neglect her.—To her friends?—Her friends forſake her.—To her relations?—Her relations diſown her.—To her parents?—They are no more, ſhe has "brought "down their grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave.[d]"—Can ſhe look to her own heart for conſolation?—No: her heart upbraids her.—Can ſhe look to heaven for deliverance?—No: her affections are ſet *not* on things *above*, *but* on things *on the earth*: her ſoul is *earthly*, *ſenſual*, *deviliſh*.—Can ſhe look to her Saviour to give her reſt?—Alas!—She knows him not—For *want of religious inſtruction* ſhe knows him not—ſhe knows nothing of him but his name—that ſacred name, which with lips full of curſing and blaſphemy, ſhe has ſo often taken in vain (BB).

Go to now ye men of pleaſure, as ye falſely call yourſelves—View the miſery—the *exquiſite* miſery, which the criminal gratification of your unreſtrained—your pampered—your brutal luſt has either originally occaſioned, or has in any degree promoted. With ſuch a picture before his eyes, and the picture is by no means overcharged, but repreſents a ſcene daily exhibited in the lurking-places of guilt—in the dreary abodes of wretchedneſs—with this picture

[d] Gen. xlii. 38.

picture before him, that man muſt have a heart of ſtone, who will dare to maintain that what the world, from an indifference to religion, commonly called *charity*, is pleaſed to denominate a venial foible—thoughtleſs imprudence—youthful levity—natural frailty; but what the holy ſcriptures term *fornication*, is not a ſin—a deadly ſin. If he makes God a liar, in refuſing to believe the divine declaration, that "*no fornicator ſhall inherit the kingdom of* "*God*[e]"—let him for once contemplate the *conſequences*, which *naturally* reſult from the commiſſion of this crime. If after this he can attempt, as many—too many do, to juſtify—to vindicate—to palliate—or under any circumſtances whatever, to extenuate this his darling luſt—he proves himſelf to be not only a *determined infidel*, but a *hardened brute*—one who, with all his affectation of *refined philanthropy and ſympathetic ſenſibility*, deſerves not the name of *man*.

My brethren, let me prevail upon *you* to ſhew yourſelves not only *men*, but *Chriſtians*.—Let me prevail upon you, by the example of private conduct—by the exerciſe of public authority (cc)—and above all, by communicating the knowledge of revealed religion

[e] 1 Cor. vi. 9.

ligion to the riſing generation—let me prevail upon you to ſtrain every nerve in repelling *the rapid progreſs of impiety and licentiouſneſs, and that deluge of profaneneſs, immorality, and every kind of vice* (DD), which hath of late years ſo rapidly broken in upon us; and which, if not ſpeedily averted, muſt eventually terminate in the utter deſtruction of this hitherto highly favoured nation. Similar cauſes have already produced their correſpondent effects in a neighbouring country, on which the moſt dreadful judgments of an offended God are now inflicting. The example is awful—it is deſigned for our admonition—God grant that in ſeaſon we may take warning. Let us, therefore, ſtrike at the root of our national tranſgreſſions, by ſpreading abroad the light of that religion which alone can *transform the heart*. Bearing in mind the corruption of our nature, and grateful for having been brought to the knowledge of divine grace and faith in Chriſt, let us teſtify the *ſincerity* of our *faith* by our *works*. Let us not only inſtruct our own children and dependants in the ways of God's laws, and in the works of his commandments, but let us alſo not withhold this good—this greateſt poſſible good—from all others to whom it is due, if it be in the power of our hand to do it.

Are not theſe little ones our brethren?—" Are they not of our " fleſh and of our bones?[f]"—Are they not like us the offſpring of *fallen Adam*, and partakers of his *corrupt nature?*—Ought we not then to afford them every means which God hath vouchſafed for the purpoſe of *ſubduing* this *corrupt nature?*—Ought we not to uſe every exertion to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? This we certainly ſhall not fail to do, if we are Chriſtians in *deed* and in *truth*, as well as in *profeſſion* and *name*.—" Then to do good and to communicate we ſhall not forget," knowing that " with ſuch ſacrifices[g]" (if offered up from pure motives), " God is at all times well pleaſed.[g]"—Then we ſhall all of us, upon this and upon every other occaſion, give alms after our power.—Then we ſhall not limit our liberality to the uſual donation, from any fooliſh apprehenſion of being eſteemed oſtentatious;—on the contrary, if we " have much we ſhall give plentifully—" if we have little we ſhall do our diligence gladly to give of that " little,[h]" and ſo gather the good reward of a " conſcience void of " offence,[i]" in the day of adverſity. And at the great judgment-day, when before Angels and Archangels, and all the company of Heaven, we ſhall ſolemnly be called upon to give an account of our

[f] Gen. ii. 23. [g] Heb. xiii. 16. [h] Tobit, iv. 8, 9. [i] Acts, xxiv. 16.

our own works—then, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be revealed—may we be found to have been actuated, in this, and in every other inſtance of our duty, by the Chriſtian motives of *piety* to God, and *charity* to man. And at that awful day, may we all be pardoned and accepted, not for any works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but through the meritorious atonement of Jeſus Chriſt—"our Saviour[k]" and "our Redeemer[l]"—"our Mediator,[m]" "our Advocate,[n]" and "our Interceſſor[o]"—"our Prophet,[p]" "our Prieſt,[q]" and "our King[r]"—"our Lord,[s] and "our God.[t]" (EE).

k Titus, i. 4. l Eph. i. 7. m Heb. xii. 24. n 1 John, ii. 1. o Heb. vii. 25.
p Luke, xxiv. 19. q Heb. vii. 17. r 1 Tim. vi. 15. s 1 Cor. xv. 47.
t Iſaiah, ix. 6. Ib. xliv. 6. Ib. liv. 5. John, xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Titus, ii. 13. John, i. 1.

AND

AND thou, Son of Man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou doſt dwell among ſcorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be diſmayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious houſe. And thou ſhalt ſpeak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are moſt rebellious. Ezekiel, ii. 6. 7.

SON of Man, I have made thee a watchman unto the houſe of Iſrael: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I ſay unto the wicked, thou ſhalt ſurely die; and thou giveſt him not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to ſave his life: the ſame wicked man ſhall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedneſs, nor from his wicked way, he ſhall die in his iniquity; but thou haſt delivered thy ſoul. Ezekiel, iii. 17, 18, 19.

I, even I am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a man that ſhall die, and of the ſon of man that ſhall be made as graſs? And haſt feared continually every day, becauſe of the fury of the oppreſſor, as if he were ready to deſtroy? And where is the fury of the oppreſſor? Iſaiah, li. 12.

CRY aloud, ſpare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſion, and the houſe of Jacob their ſins. Iſaiah, lviii. 1.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

(A) *Call himſelf a Chriſtian.*] "Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, "ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my fa- "ther, which is in heaven." Mat. vii. 21, 11.

(B) *Knowledge of the truth.*] "God our Saviour, who will have all men to be "ſaved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. Unleſs this and many other paſſages of ſimilar import be expunged from the Bible, it is unaccountable how any man can maintain the doctrine, formerly called *reprobation*, but now known by the milder name of *preterition*.

(C) *World's philoſophy.*] See the admirable Charge delivered to the Clergy of his Dioceſe, by the Biſhop of Durham, in the year 1797, in which the indiſpenſable neceſſity of inculcating the peculiar doctrines of Chriſtianity is inſiſted on with ſuch cogency of reaſoning and energy of language, that I cannot forbear producing one paſſage, in hopes that from this ſpecimen, the reader will be induced to give that attentive peruſal to the whole of this admirable Charge, which it ſo juſtly deſerves. In reply to the infidels queſtion: "What has the Bible "taught us?" this diſtinguiſhed Prelate anſwers, "It is this ignorance of ſelf, "and the ſelf-ſufficiency which accompanies it, that create a perfect inaptitude "to receive the truths of the Goſpel. No one can heartily believe the Goſpel, "who is not prediſpoſed to believe in a Saviour. To believe in a Saviour, he muſt "entertain a deep ſenſe of the depravity of ſin; he muſt know his danger of not "being ſaved; he muſt be convinced, that he cannot be ſaved by himſelf; he muſt

"be

" be conſcious of his great want of a Saviour, and muſt be very anxious to ſecure " his ſalvation: with theſe diſpoſitions, he will readily cloſe with the conditions " offered him by the Goſpel, the conditions of acceptance through faith in Chriſt. " But how is he to obtain theſe prediſpoſitions? Not from nature, not from natural " wiſdom, nor the world's philoſophy. They are too apt to carry the mind in a " very contrary direction; and to lead to ſelf-honour, ſelf-applauſe, and to any " thing rather than to ſelf-humiliation. 'The natural man receiveth not the things " of the ſpirit of God; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually " diſcerned.' How then is he to obtain theſe prediſpoſitions? From Revelation " only, with the concurrence of God's grace. 'Faith cometh by hearing, and " hearing by the word of God.' From the Goſpel alone will he form juſt views " of human nature and himſelf; from the Goſpel alone will he learn to raiſe to " its proper height, the ſtandard of religious and moral duty, and to lower the " meaſure of human merit. But theſe diſpoſitions being once derived from " Scripture, and confirmed by a rational examination of Scripture evidences, and " enlightened by the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, he receives moſt cordially, and " moſt thankfully, the great truths of the Goſpel—'Chriſt's power to ſave,' and " the 'ſinner's hopes of pardon.' He now, for the firſt time, perceives, how " 'he that believeth in the Son of God, hath the witneſs in himſelf;' and is ex- " perimentally convinced, that an unbeliever's doubts ariſe, not from defect of " evidence, but from want of feeling."

(D) *Hearer of the Goſpel.*] The peculiar doctrines of the Goſpel are all ſo intimately connected together, that it ſeems almoſt impoſſible to treat of one without introducing the reſt. For to inculcate the corruption of human nature, would be only to inſult and add miſery to the miſerable, unleſs at the ſame time juſtification by faith in the atonement of the Redeemer, be alſo maintained. But to maintain juſtification by faith in the atonement of the Redeemer, would tend to promote antinomian licentiouſneſs, unleſs at the ſame time the neceſſity of regeneration of heart, through the ſanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, be alſo inſiſted

ſiſted on. Therefore theſe three doctrines, human corruption, the atonement, and divine influence, muſt be conſidered as abſolutely inſeparable, and in every diſcourſe addreſſed to a congregation of Chriſtians, ought never to be loſt ſight of: ſince from a firm perſuaſion of their truth, ariſes every proper motive to Chriſtian obedience. For example—in the inſtance of brotherly love, I would not recommend it on account of the fitneſs, or utility, or advantage, or beauty, or excellence of this virtue; but I would recommend it on a higher principle—a principle adopted by Saint John, by all the Apoſtles, and even by Chriſt himſelf—a principle which of all others is the moſt calculated to affect the heart, when once the mind is impreſſed with a ſenſe of the true condition of human nature—I would recommend it on this principle: "If God ſo loved us, as to ſend his Son "to be the propitiation for our ſins, we ought alſo to love one another." But, alas! the Holy Scriptures inform us, that "the time will come when mankind "will not endure ſound doctrine." That this time is faſt approaching, if not already arrived, daily experience too plainly proves. To every ſincere Chriſtian it is deeply diſtreſſing to obſerve, by what trivial cauſes the majority of the Clergy are induced to adapt their diſcourſes to the vitiated taſte of the preſent times, and to neglect the faithful and diligent explanation of theſe doctrines, although they are bound by the moſt weighty conſiderations—by the moſt ſolemn engagements—by the moſt ſacred obligations to "preach the word—to be inſtant in ſeaſon, "out of ſeaſon—to reprove—to rebuke—to exhort, with all long-ſuffering and "*doctrine.*" It ſeems, however, as if many were either entirely ignorant of the word of God, or elſe were actually prevented from preaching it, by the idle terror of a nick-name—by the dread of acquiring the frightful appellation of a *Methodiſt.* When by this term was meant a ſchiſmatic—one, who in the morning attended the ſervice of the church, and prayed to be delivered "from all falſe "doctrine, hereſy, and *ſchiſm,*" and in the evening went to the conventicle, and deliberately committed that very ſin of ſchiſm, which he had the ſame day been deprecating—then indeed the appellation of a Methodiſt might juſtly be accounted a term of reproach. But ſince, in the laps of time, this word, like many others,

has

has changed its meaning—ſince it is now made uſe of to denote a man of piety—a man, who with the heart believeth unto righteouſneſs—a man, who proves by his life that his faith is ſincere—that it is ſuch as "purifieth the heart"—ſuch as "worketh by love"—ſuch as "overcometh the world"—it has ceaſed to be a term of reproach, and when applied to any one who loves the doctrine, and ſomething more, the diſcipline of the Church of England—and holds ſchiſm in equal abhorrence with the moſt enormous ſin—the only meaning it can poſſibly be underſtood to convey (if it conveys any meaning at all) is, that ſuch a perſon is what was formerly called a Chriſtian. "If the doctrines of Original ſin, of juſti-"fication by faith, of the atonement and redemption by the death of Chriſt, of "his mediation and interceſſion for us, of the influence of the Holy Ghoſt on the "heart of the pious believer, of ſanctification, of divine grace—be methodiſtical, "then, beſides the ancient fathers and writers of the Chriſtian Church, muſt we "rank among the Methodiſts the venerable names of Cranmer, and the promoters "of the reformation; the framers of the Liturgy and the Articles; Jewell, and "the other compilers of the Homilies; as alſo Hooker, Hammond, Hall, San-"derſon, Pearſon, Bull, Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, Scott, Smalridge, names im-"preſſed with the ſtamp of veneraBleneſs long before the title of Methodiſt was "invented; and to come nearer to our own times—Wilſon, Lavington, Secker, "Townſon, Horne, Hurd, Horſley, Knox." See Hutton's Appeal to the Nation on the ſubject of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's Letter to William Wilberforce, Eſq. M. P. Having in the preceding quotation mentioned the name of Horſley, I can not forbear tranſcribing the ſentiments of this eminent Prelate upon the preſent ſubject: "The great crime and folly of the Methodiſts conſiſt not ſo "much in heterodoxy, as in fanaticiſm; not in perverſe doctrine, but rather in "a diſorderly zeal for the propagation of the truth." See his invaluable Charge to the Clergy of the Dioceſe of Saint David's.

(E) *Very far.*] In the Latin this idea is expreſſed by a much ſtronger term—"*quam longiſſime*," as far as poſſible.

(F) *Conſequent*

(F) *Conſequent puniſhment of our firſt parent.*] In treating of the doctrine of Original ſin, we muſt be careful to remember that the corruption of human nature conſtitutes, not the whole, but only a part of the puniſhment inflicted on all mankind, in conſequence of the fall of Adam; for, ſays Biſhop Stillingfleet, in a Letter to Dr. Burthogge upon this ſubject: "By the *contrary* ſuppoſition, *firſt*, you give "no account of the penalty undergone by thoſe who are incapable of committing "actual ſin. If Original ſin be only the vitiating men's natural powers, as you "expreſs it, like the *neceſſity* of *ſcribbling* and *ſcratching* with a *bad* pen; then it "lies in a bare indiſpoſition of the mind, or unfitneſs for doing well; and conſe-"quently the ſin can not be imputed till thoſe powers are ill uſed, i. e. till actual "ſin be committed. But how then come *infants* to lie under the penalties of it, "by diſeaſes and death? *Secondly*, You give no account of the remiſſion of Ori-"ginal ſin in baptiſm; and I know a perſon of your learning can not but re-"member multitudes of paſſages to that purpoſe in the fathers. But what is it "that can be forgiven, if it lie *only* in ſuch a natural corruption as you ſuppoſe? "Can baptiſm be ſuppoſed to remove the inward indiſpoſition of the ſoul to good? "Then there would be no *fomes peccati* in baptiſed perſons: But if you ſuppoſe *an* "*imputation of Adam's ſin*, though conſequent to the corruption of nature, then "the remiſſion of it is eaſy to be underſtood. But then this muſt ſuppoſe Adam "to have been a public perſon by *repreſentation*, and not merely by nature." See Stillingfleet's Miſcellaneous Diſcourſes on ſeveral Occaſions, page 355.

(G) *Made after the image of God.*] That the reſemblance, which our firſt parent bore to his Creator was purely of a ſpiritual nature, is ſhewn more fully in a Sermon preached by the author at Willand, which is already before the Public.

(H) *In the preſent world.*] It appears to be only in the preſent world that God "will viſit the ſins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth "generation of them that hate him;" ſince he hath himſelf declared, that "the "ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die; the ſon ſhall *not* bear the iniquity of the father,

(L) *Over the whole human race.*] The author having in view not ſo much to examine the doctrine of original ſin in all its bearings and dependencies, as ſimply to ſtate and to eſtabliſh the doctrine itſelf abſtractedly conſidered, for the purpoſe of deducing from thence ſuch arguments as are moſt eminently calculated to promote the more immediate object of the preceding diſcourſe, has therefore ſtudiouſly avoided entering upon the objections uſually made by ſuch as lean more to the ſtrength of their own natural underſtanding, than to the declarations of divine revelation. He cannot, however, forbear aſking thoſe, who with a ſpirit truly phariſaical, thank God that they are not as other men are, who it is that hath made them to differ, and by what means this apparent difference has been effected?—Is it from any natural goodneſs of heart—is it not rather through the gracious providence of God, that they have hitherto been preſerved from groſs enormities and flagitious crimes?—Is it from any natural greatneſs of mind—is it not rather from the beneficial influence of education, that they have acquired a ſuperinduced diſinclination to ſome particular offences, and an abhorrence to ſome particular ſins, a proneneſs to which they falſely flatter themſelves is contrary to their nature?—Is it from any natural ſuperiority to the generality of mankind—is it from any innate love of virtue—is it not rather from an acquired ſenſe of decency—is it not rather from a ſelfiſh regard to reputation, that they have been preſerved from tranſgreſſing the rules of decorum, and from violating the laws of propriety?—Is it from any natural love of God—is it from any ſincere zeal for the promotion of his glory—is it not rather from a love of ſelf—is it not rather from a deſire to preſerve the good opinion of the world, that they are prevailed upon to pay a public and ſpecious obſervance to the laws of their country—laws which they do not however ſcruple to tranſgreſs, whenever they can with ſecrecy and impunity?—Is it from any natural diſpoſition to oppoſe example, to reſiſt paſſion, to ſtruggle with temptation—is it not rather from the providential abſence of temptation, and other external cauſes, that they owe their preſervation from ſins of the deepeſt dye? Hazael, when forewarned by Eliſha of the evil, which he afterwards committed againſt the children of Iſrael, being at the time

devoid

devoid of any power, unſolicited by any temptation, uninfluenced by any ambitious deſire—Hazael was ſhocked at the idea of ſo cruel a meaſure—he could not endure the thought—his heart recoiled within him—and in a ſtrain of honeſt indignation, he exclaims to the prophet: "What!—Is thy ſervant a dog that he "ſhould do this great thing?" Such was Hazael's ſentiment—It came from his heart—But, alas! how deceitful is the heart!—For, at a future period, and placed in different circumſtances—poſſeſſed of power—tempted by the proſpect of conqueſt—incited by the luſt of dominion—Hazael diſplayed the natural depravity of the human heart, and readily yielded to thoſe evil propenſities which he had once imagined were contrary to his nature; ſince it is recorded that he "oppreſſed "Iſrael all the days of Jehoahaz, and ſmote them in all the coaſts of Iſrael."

The preceding remarks are particularly applicable to that numerous claſs of nominal Chriſtians, whoſe lives appear to be decent and moral, while their hearts remain corrupt and unregenerate. Should it here be aſked how is this diſcrimination to be made?—Who can know the heart, but God only?—I anſwer in the language of Scripture that "the word of God is a diſcerner of the thoughts and "intents of the heart"—that "ye ſhall know men by their fruits"—and that "the "fruits of the ſpirit" are equally *manifeſt* with "the fruits of the fleſh." Therefore, by comparing a man's conduct with the word of God, and by examining whether his life diſplays the fruits of the Spirit of God, we may ſafely determine, whether he be a ſincere, or only a nominal Chriſtian—whether regeneration be already begun in his heart, or whether he be not yet in a ſtate of grace, whether "he does all his works for to be ſeen of men," or whether he "ſeeketh the "honour that cometh from God only." Thus may we with tolerable certainty judge of another man's heart, without meriting the imputation of uncharitableneſs. Uncharitableneſs!—It is high time to have done with the ſenſeleſs cant of charity, which inſults the underſtandings, and trifles with the feelings of thoſe who are really concerned for the happineſs of their fellow creatures. Charity, indeed, is partial to the object of her regard, and where actions are of a doubtful nature, this partiality induces her to refer them to a good, rather than to a bad

motive:

motive. But although ſhe is inclined to hope all things and to believe all things, whenever there exiſts any ground for hope or for belief, yet ſhe cannot poſſibly hope or believe any thing which is contrary both to reaſon and to revelation—ſhe cannot hope or believe that the tree is good, when ſhe ſees and knows that the fruit is evil. For the true Chriſtian grace of charity is a very different principle from that which the world calls charity. It is a principle which diſpoſes us to be vigilant—fervent—full of ſolicitude—full of good offices—not ſo eaſily ſatisfied—not ſo ready to believe that every thing is going on well as a matter of courſe—but apprehenſive of miſchief—apt to ſuſpect danger—and prompt to extend relief. That wretched quality, by which the ſacred name of charity is now ſo generally and ſo falſly uſurped, is no other than *downright indifference*, which againſt the plaineſt evidence, or at leaſt where there is ſtrong ground of apprehenſion, is eaſily contented to believe that all is well, becauſe it has no anxieties to allay, no fears to repreſs. Such is the contraſt between the charity practiſed by the world, and that which is enjoined by the religion of Jeſus Chriſt. By the former a nominal Chriſtian is actuated—from the latter a ſincere Chriſtian would never intentionally depart; but is induced by this motive to ſound the alarm to thoſe, whoſe ſouls he judges to be in a ſtate of danger, becauſe their lives do, in few reſpects, correſpond with the unerring precepts of the word of God.

(M) *The majority of mankind were wicked.*] Οἱ πλείους κακοι. *Bias.*

(N) *Deſperation.*] It is remarkable that deſperation is the very effect attributed in our ſeventeenth Article to the reception of *abſolute* and *unconditional* predeſtination, by curious and carnal perſons: whence it is obvious that this article, however it may have been miſrepreſented, is ſo far from maintaining that doctrine, that it does in reality cenſure it in the ſtrongeſt terms, declaring it to be a moſt dangerous downfall. Still it very properly does not reject the doctrine of conditional perſonal election, becauſe this doctrine not only reſults neceſſarily from that of God's foreknowledge, but alſo is clearly revealed in ſcripture, where the

term

term *elect* ſeems to be uſed in three different and diſtinct ſenſes. It is applied, firſt, in a general ſenſe to thoſe *nations* who embrace the goſpel.

Secondly, with a more limited meaning to thoſe *individuals* who continue faithful unto death, and who ſhall therefore receive a crown of life.

Laſtly, in a more particular ſignification, to thoſe perſons, "to whom (above others) more "abundant meaſures of grace were purpoſed to be vouchſafed "before the foundation of the world, when *(they being not yet born, and having "done neither good nor evil)* the deſignation was *not of works, but of him that "calleth.*" See Ridley's Sermons on the Holy Ghoſt.

"Some I have choſen of *peculiar grace*
"Elect above the reſt. *Milton.*

(O) *Do ſpring out neceſſarily.*] Having produced this article of our church, I cannot forbear expreſſing my honeſt indignation, at the unprovoked and unwarrantable attacks recently made upon two living writers of the firſt eminence in this kingdom, Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Hannah More, both of whom have ably maintained this eſſential doctrine. The only knowledge I have of their common opponent is from his writings, and although I ſincerely wiſh that Mr. Daubeny's opinions, in regard to Church-government, were univerſally entertained—although I have not the ſmalleſt objection to follow Mr. D. as a guide to the *church*, yet I can by no means agree to accompany him into the *pulpit*. By repeatedly aiming his *telum imbelle* at the ſame mark, this Author ſeems determined, if poſſible, to wound Chriſtianity in her vitals: for (to change the metaphor) while he protects the *outworks* of religion, he deſtroys religion *itſelf*—while he defends the ramparts againſt the approach of the enemy, he himſelf ſets fire to the town, and yet hopes to preſerve the arſenal. Having neither any perſonal acquaintance with this gentleman, nor any knowledge of his peculiar habits, it is utterly impoſſible for me to ſay, whether or not, like Homer, he now and then indulges himſelf in taking a nod in his ſtudy, and at ſuch ſeaſons is apt to talk in his ſleep;—but of one point I am certain, that I ſhall not hazard much

much in declaring my decided opinion, that at the time when Mr. D. wrote his letter to Mrs. H. More, he either could not be perfectly awake, or elſe, was not altogether *compos mentis*, for certainly no man in his ſenſes would commit himſelf to ſuch a degree, as to make the following aſſertion 'The Church of England 'teaches the ſame doctrine. She no where, that I know of, deſcribes faith, ab-'ſtractedly taken, as "never exiſting without producing the evangelical fruits of "holineſs;" 'nor does ſhe any where repreſent the duties of Chriſtianity as the '*neceſſary* production of its Doctrines.' *Letter to Mrs. H. More, Page* 40. Pray, did Mr. Daubeny ever read the twelfth article of the Church of England? —Does he recollect that in it, the Church of England teaches, that "good works "do ſpring out *neceſſarily* of a true and lively faith?" And let me put another queſtion—When Mr. D. was formally matriculated at the Univerſity—when he was duly admitted to the reſpective orders of Deacon and Prieſt—when he was canonically inſtituted to the Living of Chriſt's Church, in Bath—Pray did he obtain a diſpenſation for ſubſcribing the thirty-nine Articles?—Or, if he really did ſubſcribe them, was he not all the while laughing in his ſleeve? For is it poſſible that Mr. D. could ever ſincerely, and *ex animo* have given his aſſent and conſent to a doctrine which he now ſo zealouſly oppoſes? Even his own pariſh-clerk, ſhould he, in fumbling over the Church-prayer-book, chance to light upon this twelfth article, would be enabled to confute Mr. D. *totidem verbis, totidem ſyllabis, totidem literis.* If Mr. D's letter deſerved a *ſerious* anſwer, it would not be difficult to detect the fallacy of his reaſoning, and to ſhew that the grounds of his attack are as unjuſt, as the doctrine he maintains is unſound, which has already been proved. For he produces a paſſage from Mrs. H. More's Strictures, containing a ſentiment which ſhe advances for the expreſs purpoſe of confuting it, and this very ſentiment Mr. D. is pleaſed to repreſent as her own. In order to make good his aſſertion, he omits a comma in one part of the quotation, and inſerts it in another—he prints a word in italics, which, in the original is not ſo printed—and thus leads an incautious reader to miſunderſtand the Author's meaning. The limits of theſe remarks will not permit me to enter into particulars, and

to

o 3-9
1

to point out every inſtance of unfairneſs in the conduct of this extraordinary controverſialiſt: ſuffice it to ſay, that a miſtatement of the argument, and an intentional change in the punctuation and tranſcription of a paſſage, are ample reaſons to juſtify the charge of unfairneſs. Having mentioned Mrs. H. More's Strictures on female education, I cannot deny myſelf the pleaſure of tranſcribing the juſtly-merited Eulogium paſſed on this incomparable work by the Biſhop of London, in a note ſubjoined to his late excellent Charge to his Clergy: "The "ſpirit of religion excited at the time by the impreſſive admonitions of Mr. "Wilberforce, Mr. Bowdler, Mr. King, and many other pious and able writers, "was certainly very conſiderable. And to theſe it would now be injuſtice not "to add the name of another highly-approved author, Mrs. Hannah More; whoſe "extraordinary and verſatile talents can equally accommodate themſelves to "the cottage and the palace: who, while ſhe is diffuſing among the lower orders "of the people an infinity of little religious tracts, calculated to reform and "comfort them in this world, and to ſave them in the next, is at the ſame time "applying all the powers of a vigorous and highly cultivated mind, to the in-"ſtruction, improvement, and delight of the moſt exalted of her own ſex. I "allude more particularly to her laſt work, on female education, which preſents "to the reader ſuch a fund of good ſenſe, of wholeſome counſel, of ſagacious "obſervation, of a knowledge of the world and of the female heart, of high-"toned morality and genuine Chriſtian piety; and all this enlivened with ſuch "brilliancy of wit, ſuch richneſs of imagery, ſuch variety and felicity of alluſion, "ſuch neatneſs and elegance of diction, as are not, I conceive, eaſily to be "found, ſo combined and blended together, in any other work in the Engliſh "language.

"Of the above-mentioned little tracts no leſs than two millions were ſold in "the firſt year; and they contributed, I am perſuaded, very eſſentially to coun-"teract the poiſon of thoſe impious and immoral pamphlets, which, as I have "already ſtated, were diſperſed over the kingdom in ſuch numbers by ſocieties "of infidels and republicans."

(P) *The gift of the Holy Ghoſt.*] The ordinary operation of the Holy Ghoſt is ably defended and beautifully illuſtrated by Dr. Knox, in his Chriſtian Philoſophy, a work in which are collected the opinions of many of the moſt judicious divines upon this ſubject. But for a fuller inveſtigation of the doctrine, the reader is referred to Gloceſter Ridley's Eight Sermons on the Divinity and Operations of the Holy Ghoſt, a volume ſo excellent, but unfortunately grown ſo ſcarce, that the author of theſe remarks is induced to propoſe republiſhing it, if he can procure a ſufficient number of Subſcribers.

(Q) *Regeneration.*] If a thorough knowledge of the human heart, and an intimate acquaintance with the ſacred volume, be any recommendation to an Author, I know no one who can lay greater claim to this recommendation than Dr. Witherſpoon, whoſe treatiſe on regeneration ſhould be in the hands of every Chriſtian. With ſome allowance for Scotch idioms and Scotch prejudices, I would likewiſe recommend his two ſmall volumes of Sermons, which ſeem to come nearer to the heart than almoſt any Sermons I have yet read.

(R) *Spiritual fountain.*] "*Faith is the gift of God.* To the Giver only it be-
" longs to preſcribe the means of obtaining his bounty. He has preſcribed the
" written word and prayer. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of*
" *God.* But the whole tenour of the goſpel proves, that the written word has
" not *efficacy* of itſelf, to convince our underſtandings, nor reform our hearts;
" to produce either faith in God, or repentance from dead works, without the
" aid of the Holy Ghoſt. Now the aid of the Holy Ghoſt is promiſed to prayer:
" If ye, ſays our Saviour, " *being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your chil-*
" *dren; how much more ſhall God give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him.*"
Knox's Chriſtian Philoſophy.

(S) *Book now ſeldom peruſed.*] " Our eccleſiaſtical writers inform us, that the
" ſcriptures, when the tranſlation of them into our language, was firſt permitted
" to

" to be read in this kingdom, were read by perſons in all ſituations of life, with " a ſerioufneſs and a diligence, that were ſuitable to their importance."—" I ap- " peal to the impartial judgment of every one, who is competent to judge, whe- " ther this general reverent regard to the ſcriptures, and diligence in the ſtudy of " them, hath not been greatly diminiſhed among us; and whether, if it hath, " ſuch a change can have taken place without having produced correſpondent " effects upon our faith and our manners." *Sawkins's Faſt Sermon, preached at Oxford, in* 1799.

That very learned and able man, Sir William Jones, whoſe attainments place him upon the higheſt rank of intellectual eminence, after poſſeſſing himſelf of all that the ſages and philoſophers of all times have ſaid and thought upon the works of nature, wrote the following note at the end of his bible: " I have attentively " and regularly read theſe Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, " independently of its divine origin, contains more true ſublimity, more pure " morality, more important hiſtory, and finer ſtrains both of poetry and elo- " quence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or lan- " guage they may have been compoſed. The two parts of which the ſcriptures " conſiſt, are connected by a chain of compoſitions, which bear no reſemblance " in form or ſtyle to any that can be produced from the ſtores of Grecian, Per- " ſian, or even Arabian learning: the antiquity of theſe compoſitions no man " can doubt, and the unreſtrained application of them to events long ſubſequent to " their publication, is a ſolid ground of belief that they are genuine productions, " and conſequently inſpired."

(T) *Empty Churches.*] While the Churches are daily growing more and more empty, the Conventicles are growing more and more crowded. *Quære*, is there not a fault ſome where? " I am much miſtaken," ſays Biſhop Horſley, " if a " proper diligence on our own parts, to inculcate theſe doctrines, which are in- " deed the very baſis of the Chriſtian ſyſtem, which the Philoſophizers of the " preſent times explain away, and the illiterate enthuſiaſt, by the meanneſs of

" his ſtyle, and the abſurdity of his illuſtrations, too often burleſques; I am miſ-
" taken, if a proper diligence, on our part, to inculcate theſe doctrines, would
" not ſoon ſuperſede the neceſſity of all controverſy. Truth, deeply planted in
" the public mind, would keep poſſeſſion by its own native ſtrength; the com-
" mon people, made proficients in the faith, however in other reſpects illiterate,
" and accuſtomed to the doctrine originally delivered to the Saints, would turn
" with horror from every thing of a contrary ſound. Nouriſhed with the ſincere
" milk of the word, by their proper paſtors, they would refuſe a drink of doubt-
" ful quality, mingled by a ſtranger. In a word, *our churches would be thronged*;
" while the Moralizing Unitarian would be left to read his dull weekly lecture to
" the walls of his deſerted conventicle; and the Field-Preacher would bellow un-
" regarded to the wilderneſs."

(U) *The novel-reading—the ſober-minded—the innocent daughters of diſſipation.*] Of all the means which have been invented to poiſon the minds of the higher and middle claſſes of ſociety, none have proved more ſucceſsful than *novels*. Novels are for the moſt part calculated, not only to diſqualify the reader for the enjoyments of another world, but abſolutely to unfit him for living comfortably and contentedly in this. They paint life in falſe colours—they deſcribe mankind as divided into two claſſes of beings, *angels* and *devils*—under the maſk of *ſentimental affection*, they excite filthy images in the mind—with the pretence of inſtilling *exquiſite ſenſibility*, they in reality ſtimulate ungoverned paſſion—under the colour of inculcating *extreme ſympathy*, they in effect promote a want of reſignation to the divine will.—In ſhort, novels are only fit to be peruſed in that eccentric place, called by Milton, *the limbo of vanity—the Paradiſe of fools*. And yet the Ladies read them—yes, they will read them, becauſe they love them—and the more theſe ſober-minded daughters are amuſed with ſtories of *murder* and *adultery*, commonly called *duelling* and *gallantry*, the more they are pleaſed. With minds ſo ſenſualized—with hearts ſo corrupted—with taſtes ſo vitiated—need we be at all aſtoniſhed to find them rejecting the pleaſures of intellect, and eagerly purſuing the

the pleaſures of ſenſe—diſſatisfied with domeſtic enjoyments, and running about in queſt of frivolous and vain amuſements—addicted to every ſpecies of diſſipation which their circumſtances can afford—and ſometimes even compaſſing their object at the expence of *honeſty* and *honor*. This general prevalence of diſſipation among the female ſex, is a ſubject which muſt afford painful reflection to every ſerious mind, and which has therefore, of late years, called forth the juſt animadverſions of ſome of the moſt eminent writers of the age. Of this deſcription are Mr. Giſborne's Duties of the Female Sex, and another publication already mentioned, Mrs. H. More's Strictures on Female education—works which ought to be not only read, but ſtudied, by every Mother of a family, who has at heart the welfare of her female offspring—works, both of which, and particularly the latter of them, are eminently calculated to produce the moſt beneficial effects to the riſing generation. Should theſe excellent publications be peruſed with that attention they deſerve, we may yet hope that novels will grow into *diſrepute*, and that the Scriptures will again be deemed *intereſting*—thoſe Scriptures which cannot now be read with pleaſure by the faſhionable part of the female ſex, becauſe they *directly condemn* their whole conduct in every point of view. In confirmation of this remark, I might produce innumerable proofs from the Bible, but at preſent will only requeſt the reader to compare the manners and dreſs of the Jewiſh women, as deſcribed by the Prophet Iſaiah, with the account which is given of the ladies of our own times by Mrs. H. More. The Prophet's words are: "Becauſe "the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with ſtretched-forth necks, and "wanton eyes, walking, and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with "their feet: Therefore the Lord will ſmite with a ſcab the crown of the head of "the daughter of Zion, and the Lord will diſcover their ſecret parts. In that "day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their "feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the "bracelets, and the muffilers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and "head-bands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, the rings, and noſe-jewels, the "changeable ſuits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the criſp-

"ing-pins,

" ing-pins, the glaſſes, and the fine linen, the hoods, and the veils. And it ſhall " come to paſs, that inſtead of ſweet ſmell, there ſhall be ſtink; and inſtead of a " girdle, a rent; and inſtead of well ſet hair, baldneſs: and inſtead of a ſtomacher, " a girding of ſackcloth; and burning, inſtead of beauty." Such are the words of one who *ſpake as he was moved by the* Holy Ghoſt. Let us now hear what Mrs. H. More ſays of her own countrywomen: " To attract admiration is the great " principle ſedulouſly inculcated into her young heart; and is conſidered as the " fundamental maxim; and perhaps, if we were required to condenſe the reign- " ing ſyſtem of the brilliant education of a lady into an aphoriſm, it might be " compriſed in this ſhort ſentence, *to allure and to ſhine.*" And again, ſpeaking of the dangers ariſing from an exceſſive cultivation of the arts, ſhe aſks: " May " we not rank among their preſent corrupt conſequences, the unchaſte *coſtume*, " the impure ſtyle of dreſs, and that indelicate ſtatue-like exhibition of the female " figure, which by its artfully-diſpoſed folds, its wet and adheſive drapery, ſo de- " fines the form as to prevent covering itſelf from becoming a veil? This licen- " tious mode, as the acute Monteſquieu obſerved on the dances of the Spartan " virgins, has taught us *to ſtrip chaſtity itſelf of modeſty.*" And now let me aſk, is this to *adorn themſelves in modeſt apparel, with ſhamefacedneſs and ſobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or coſtly array?*—Is this to *adorn themſelves, not with that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: but with the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which is, in the ſight of God, of great price?*—Is this to *give none occaſion to the adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully?*—Miſtake me not—I am not your adverſary—Eſteem me not your enemy, becauſe I tell you the truth.—Were I not to tell you the truth, I ſhould indeed be your enemy: but in theſe degenerate days, if the Miniſters of Chriſt were to hold their peace, would there not be juſt cauſe to complain that, " The " watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, which " cannot bark; ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber: yea that they are greedy " dogs, which can never have enough, they are ſhepherds that cannot under- " ſtand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his " quarter?".

" quarter?" A Clergyman therefore does not go beyond his province, but is faithfully exerciſing the duties of his function, when he maintains that diſſipation in the one ſex is equally ſinful and offenſive in the ſight of God, as licentiouſneſs in the other. It draws off the affections from things above—It incapacitates the mind from the duties of devotion—It diſqualifies the heart for communion with God—It effectually deſtroys, what Biſhop Horſley beautifully denominates, " the " myſterious commerce of the believer's ſoul with the Divine Spirit." For let the reader picture to himſelf a modiſh Damſel returned from ſome crowded temple of diſſipation, and fallen upon her knees to repeat *pro formâ*, not her *veſpers*, but her *mattins*. Fluſhed with the hopes of having made a *conqueſt* at the Ball—or elevated at an *acceſſion of pin-money*, ſkilfully acquired at the card-table—or languiſhing from the laſting impreſſion of ſome " *amorous ditty*" at the Concert—or tranſported with the remembrance of ſome *melting ſcene* in the tragi-comic Farce—and all the while ſaying her prayers, becauſe ſhe happens to be, in the *geographical* ſenſe of the word, a Chriſtian.—Say, reader, does ſhe offer *incenſe*—or rather does ſhe not offer *inſult*, to that Omniſcient Being, unto whom all hearts be open, all deſires known, and from whom no ſecrets are hid? Is it a breach, not of *modern*, but of *ſcriptural* charity, to fear that, as ſhe draws near unto God with her lips, while her heart is far from him, her very prayer will be turned into ſin?—Can ſhe be ſaid to " redeem the time"—to " overcome the world"—to " have her converſation in heaven"—and not to " follow a multitude to do evil?" —Can ſhe be ſaid to " walk by faith, and not by ſight"—to have her " affections " ſet on things above, and not on things on the earth?"—precepts, which might all be ſtrictly obſerved, without taking the veil—without extinguiſhing a ſingle particle of cheerfulneſs, vivacity, ſpirit, good humour, or any one quality, which conduces to render a woman agreeable, amiable, and deſirable as a help meet for man. Of ſuch genteel and faſhionable females it may with the utmoſt veracity be affirmed, that they are not Chriſtians but Infidels, reſembling the antediluvian ladies, as deſcribed by Milton:

" A bevy of fair women, richly gay
" In gems and wanton dreſs; to th' harp they *ſing*
" Soft amorous ditties, and in dance *come* on:
——" A fair female troop——
" Of Goddeſſes ſo blithe, ſo ſmooth, ſo gay,
" Yet empty of all good wherein conſiſts
" Woman's domeſtic honour and chief praiſe;
" Bred only and completed to the taſte
" Of luſtful appetence, to ſing, to dance,
" To dreſs, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye.
——" Fair atheiſts, *who* now ſwim in joy,
" Erelong to ſwim at large."

From the contemplation of ſo diſguſting a picture of feminine depravity, let us turn our eyes to a ſcene of a more agreeable nature—a ſcene which the excellent writer did once deſcribe from what he had learnt by theory alone, but of the truth of which deſcription he has ſince been perfectly convinced by experience. " Doubtleſs," ſays Mr. Wilberforce, " this more favourable diſpoſition to Reli-
" gion in the female ſex, was graciouſly deſigned alſo to make women doubly va-
" luable in the wedded ſtate: and it ſeems to afford to the married man the means
" of rendering an active ſhare in the buſineſs of life more compatible, than it
" would otherwiſe be, with the livelieſt devotional feelings; that when the huſ-
" band ſhould return to his family, worn and haraſſed by worldly cares or pro-
" feſſional labours, the wife, habitually preſerving a warmer and more unimpaired
" ſpirit of devotion, than is perhaps conſiſtent with being immerſed in the buſtle
" of life, might revive his languid piety; and that the religious impreſſions of both
" might derive new force and tenderneſs from the animating ſympathies of con-
" jugal affection. Can a more pleaſing image be preſented to a conſiderate mind,
" than that of a couple, happy in each other and in the pledges of their mutual
" love, uniting in an act of grateful adoration to the author of all their mercies;
" recommending each other, and the objects of their common care, to the divine
" protection; and repreſſing the ſolicitude of conjugal and parental tenderneſs by

" a

" a confiding hope, that, through all the changes of this uncertain life, the Diſ-
" poſer of all things will aſſuredly cauſe all to work together for the good of them
" that love and put their truſt in him; and that, after this uncertain ſtate ſhall
" have paſſed away, they ſhall be admitted to a joint participation of never ending
" happineſs. It is ſurely no mean or ignoble office which we would allot to the
" female ſex, when we would thus commit to them the charge of maintaining
" in lively exercise whatever emotions moſt dignify and adorn human nature;
" when we would make them as it were the medium of our intercourſe with the
" heavenly world, the faithful repoſitories of the religious principle, for the be-
" nefit both of the preſent and of the riſing generation." See page 434 of A Practical View of the prevailing Religious Syſtem of profeſſed Chriſtians, in the higher and middle Claſſes in this Country, contraſted with real Chriſtianity, by Mr. Wilberforce, who (to adopt the language of the Britiſh Critic) in practical, or what Dr. Johnſon calls hortatory theology, has not been exceeded by the ableſt of his predeceſſors. With ſuch a view of female worth and female uſefulneſs—a view, which, though rare, is not chimerical—that man muſt have a cold heart, who is not ready to exclaim with our immortal poet:

" Hail wedded Love, myſterious law, true ſource
" Of human offspring, ſole propriety
" In Paradiſe of all things common elſe.
" By thee adult'rous luſt was driv'n from men
" Among the beſtial herds to range; by thee
" Founded in reaſon, loyal, juſt and pure,
" Relations dear, and all the charities
" Of father, ſon, and brother firſt were known.
" Far be' it, that I ſhould write thee ſin or blame,
" Or think thee unbefitting holieſt place,
" Perpetual fountain of domeſtic ſweets,
" Whoſe bed is undefil'd and chaſte pronounc'd,
" Preſent, or paſt, as ſaints and patriarchs us'd.
" Here love his golden ſhafts employs, here lights
" His conſtant lamp, and waves his purple wings,

" Reigns here and revels; not in the bought ſmile
" Of harlots, loveleſs, joyleſs, unendear'd,
" Caſual fruition; nor in court amours,
" Mix'd dance, or wanton maſk, or midnight ball,
" Or ſerenade, which the ſtarv'd lover ſings
" To his proud fair, beſt quitted with diſdain."

Milton's Paradiſe Loſt, Book iv. *Verſe* 750.

I will make but one obſervation more—an obſervation which perhaps may poſſeſs more weight than any argument I have yet produced. Attend ye miſſes—miſguided miſſes—ye miſunderſtand the matter—ye miſtake the mark—and miſs your aim.—Liſten to what I now ſay, and act accordingly.—If women were ſuch as they ſhould be, and ſuch as they might be, they would then become objects of men's *love* and *eſteem*, while at preſent they are (*generally* ſpeaking) objects only of their *luſt* and of their *avarice*.—If women would but qualify themſelves to make men happy, I believe I know enough of the ſentiments and wiſhes of my own ſex, to be enabled to ſay with tolerable certainty, that in that caſe (with the exception of Bachelors of Arts, Bachelors of Law, Bachelors of Divinity, Bachelors of Phyſic, and Bachelors of Muſic) there would ſcarcely be found a ſingle Bachelor throughout the whole kingdom. For Bachelors are not as great fools as you take them to be—they are well aware that, in a ſtate of celibacy, life loſes, upon a moderate computation, one half of its comforts—at the ſame time they are not ſo imprudent as to expect that theſe comforts can be enjoyed in the ſociety of a modern fine Lady. By fine Ladies, I do not mean ſuch as flutter about the precincts of Court, but ſuch as ſwarm in every trading city, and in every market town—ſuch, in ſhort, as pride themſelves with the notion of being *genteel*; becauſe, forſooth, like Jezebel, they paint their faces—wear curled wigs—bedizen themſelves—bedeck themſelves with waving feathers—with *frenchified* red bonnets—flaming ſcarlet neckerchiefs—black veils—long muſlin trains—ſhort waiſts—variegated ſandels—dangling ear-rings—pearl necklaces—velvet bracelets—and all the other indelicate ornaments and meretricious furbelows of faſhionable female attire.

Having

Having ſpoken diſreſpectfully of faſhionable amuſements, the author may reaſonably expect to raiſe a hornet's neſt about his ears: for, "*a ſnug and friendly* "*game at cards*" is that "*ſlice of the hog*" which nobody will give up.

" Renounce the world—the preacher cries.
" We do—a multitude replies.
" While one as innocent regards
" A ſnug and friendly game at cards;
" And one, whatever you may ſay,
" Can ſee no evil in a play;
" Some love a concert, or a race;
" And others—ſhooting, and the chace.
" Revil'd and lov'd, renounc'd and follow'd,
" Thus, bit by bit, the world is ſwallow'd;
" Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,
" Yet likes a ſlice as well as he;
" With ſophiſtry their ſauce they ſweeten,
" Till quite from tail to ſnout 'tis eaten."

See Cowper's Love of the World reproved, or Hypocriſy detected.

That I may not indulge myſelf in garrulity, and ſpin out this enormous note to a ſtill greater length, I ſhall refer the reader for my ſentiments upon the ſubject of each faſhionable amuſement, to a very entertaining little volume, not long ſince publiſhed, entitled "Three Dialogues on the Amuſements of Clergymen," ſaid to be the ſubſtance of a converſation which once paſſed between Biſhop Stillingfleet and a Mr. Frampton.

(W) *Sponſors.*] The Canons of our Church prohibit a perſon from becoming a ſponſor, until he has received the ſacrament: whatever offence, therefore, a Clergyman may give to *faſtidious goſſips*, it is his duty to interrogate them upon this head, and not to take it for granted, that they are ſo qualified.

(X) *Confirmation.*] Since Arian and Socinian tenets have become ſo prevalent, and the doctrine of divine influence has grown into diſrepute, the *means* of grace

have conſequently been little attended to—the ordinances of religion have been diſregarded—and the Miniſters of the Church have been treated with contempt. There is, however, no rite which has been more ſhametully neglected, than that of Confirmation:—with pain be it ſpoken, this rite is now very generally accounted, a mere form—an idle ceremony—an old-faſhioned, ridiculous cuſtom—which may be either complied with or diſpenſed with, juſt as caprice ſhall dictate. If this notion were well founded, why did the compilers of our Liturgy direct, that "there ſhall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until ſuch time as "he be confirmed, or be ready and deſirous to be confirmed?" But even the Holy Communion itſelf is now conſidered barely as a commemorative rite, and not as a means of obtaining ſpiritual communion with God—not as a "feeding "on Chriſt in our hearts by faith"—not as "the ſtrengthening and refreſhing of "our ſouls by the body and blood of Chriſt." Indeed it is not to be wondered at, that the efficacy of theſe ordinances is not admitted, when the Miniſters of Chriſt are conſidered as impoſtors, and the divine origin of their authority is either diſputed or denied. On the important ſubject of Church-government, however, I can not at preſent enter, without exceeding the limits of a ſingle note; but I hope, ſhould the great Diſpoſer of all events be pleaſed to bleſs me with a continuance of life and health, to make my ſentiments known upon this, as well as upon each of the moſt diſtinguiſhing doctrines of the Chriſtian religion, in a courſe of Sermons which I am at preſent preparing to be preached at the Mayor's Chapel in Exeter, and which I deſign for publication, as ſoon as they are all delivered. In the mean time, I would earneſtly recommend a ſhort Tract, which was printed at Glouceſter, in the year 1787, under the title of "An Eſſay on the Church," and which has ſince been republiſhed in that admirable publication, called "The Scholar armed "againſt the Errors of the Time, or a Collection of Tracts on the Principles and "Evidences of Chriſtianity, the Conſtitution of the Church, and the Authority of "Civil Government." By an attentive peruſal of this Tract, every unprejudiced mind may be convinced of the truth of the following declaration in the preface to our Ordination Service: "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy

"Scripture

" Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apoſtles' time there have been " theſe orders of Miniſter's in Chriſt's Church; Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons. " Which offices were evermore held in ſuch reverend eſtimation, that no man " might preſume to execute any of them, except he were firſt called, tried, exa- " mined, and known to have ſuch qualities as are requiſite for the ſame; and alſo " by public prayer, with impoſition of hands, were approved and admitted there- " unto by lawful authority." Such is the doctrine of the Church of England— Let then the ſelf-appointed teachers, who boaſt that they maintain the doctrines of this Church in their utmoſt purity, make good their aſſertion, if they can. If not, we muſt neceſſarily conclude, that they are " unruly, and vain talkers and " deceivers: whoſe mouths muſt be ſtopped, who ſubvert whole houſes, teaching " things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's ſake." For (as the Biſhop of Exeter juſtly obſerves, in his late Charge to the Clergy) " as to thoſe, who, " without any authoriſed call or legal ſanction, obtrude themſelves into other " perſon's Cures, I conceive they neither act according to the principles of our " Church Eſtabliſhment, nor of Chriſtianity itſelf. Whatever they may profeſs, " and whatever zeal they may pretend for that Church of which they are called " Members, and the emoluments of which they are ready to receive, they are in " fact, Diſſenters; not ſuch as conſcientiouſly differing in points of doctrine or " worſhip, can ſtill live among us in the principles of Chriſtian love and charity; " but Diſſenters of the worſt kind: enemies in the guiſe of friends; drawing off " the congregation from thoſe to whom they ought to liſten, and promoting fac- " tion and ſchiſm where peace and harmony ought to prevail.

" Where theſe men violate the laws of their country by ſuch intruſion, they " ought to be reſiſted, and taught to reſpect them; but this reſiſtance may ſtill " be made without ſeeking to gratify private reſentment, or departing from the " ſpirit of peace."

I cannot conclude this note without expreſſing the ſatisfaction I feel at being enabled to announce, from the firſt authority, that the Miniſter has promiſed to bring a Bill into Parliament for reſtricting at leaſt, if not for entirely prohibiting,

what

what is now become a grand national evil, the preaching of ignorant and illiterate *ſchiſmatics*; who have for ſome years paſt been ſpreading the utmoſt miſchief throughout the nation, by vilifying the authority of the regular Clergy, and by exciting diſaffection towards that pure and apoſtolical branch of Chriſt's church eſtabliſhed in this kingdom.

(Y) *Infidelity.*] Practical infidelity is at this day far more prevalent than ſome are willing to allow. To that ſource may eaſily be traced the erroneous idea here combated, which in fact is founded upon the ſame principle as the old Popiſh doctrine of indulgences and works of ſupererogation. People ſeem to fancy, that they can keep a ſort of Debtor and Creditor Account with their Maker, and that they can purchaſe ſo many ſinful gratifications for an equal number of meritorious actions, ſo that if upon ſumming up the reckoning, there ſhould, in their own opinion, prove to be a balance in their favour, they will go and boldly claim, as their juſt due, that reward, which, if they believed the Goſpel, they would know, is not of works, but of grace, for "after we have done all thoſe things which "are commanded us, we are but unprofitable ſervants—we have only done that "which was our duty to do."

(Z) *Horrible conceit.*] The abſurdity of this conceit, concerning the effect of charity, is ſo evident upon the ſlighteſt conſideration, that it might almoſt be imagined that no man of ſenſe, underſtanding, and diſcernment, could for a moment entertain it. And yet the late Lord Orford, who was never thought to be deficient in ſenſe, underſtanding, or diſcernment, introduces this very ſentiment into one of his letters to Mrs. H. More.

(AA) *Commentators.*] Pole, Mills, Leighton, Hammond, Burkitt, Hardy, &c.

(BB) For a pathetic, a beautiful, and an animated deſcription of the miſery which naturally ariſes from proſtitution, no pen can eaſily excel that of Mr. Richards; whoſe Matilda, or the Dying Penitent, is truly admirable. It is, however,

however, remarkable, that ſo diguſting is the repreſentation of this miſery to thoſe who promote it, that it has been generally inſinuated, that this poem is very inferior to the former productions of this elegant writer. I leave to learned Critics to determine this point in regard to the comparative merit of the language;—to me it appears chaſte, nervous, and energetic:—but of the ſentiments, I muſt declare my decided opinion, thar they do honour to the Author's heart, and from his heart they evidently flow. May I be permitted to expreſs my regret that this Poet has never ſince reſumed his ſong.

(CC) *Public authority.*] The increaſe of proſtitution, in this kingdom, has of late years been ſo rapid, that it is now become a ſubject which certainly demands the attention of the legiſlature; that the execution of thoſe excellent laws, which, though ſtill in exiſtence, are ſuffered to lie dormant, may be enforced under ſevere penalties. For with the Poet, we may juſtly aſk: "*Quid leges ſine moribus* "*vanæ proficiant?*" But in regard to negligence in enforcing the laws, there is no claſs of perſons, whoſe conduct is more cenſurable than that of the eſtabliſhed Clergy:—they, whoſe office it is to "watch over the ſouls of their flock, as they "that muſt give an account:"—they whoſe duty it is "conſtantly to ſpeak the "truth—boldly to rebuke vice—and patiently to ſuffer for the truth's ſake:"—they who may with reaſon bluſh to hear a heathen boaſt that he was "*Virtutis* "*veræ cuſtos, rigiduſque ſatelles.*" I allude to the general neglect of inflicting the church-diſcipline of penance, The Clergy ought to recollect, and if they do not recollect, they muſt be reminded that every Church-warden, at his admiſſion into office, ſolemnly ſwears, that he will preſent every thing which he knows is preſentable by the laws of the Realm—that a paper is uſually delivered to him, ſpecifying every particular concerning what things are preſentable—that among theſe whoredom is pointed out—that at the expiration of his office he delivers in what is termed a preſentment, teſtifying that he has faithfully executed the duties of his office—that moreover, to the truth of this certificate the Miniſter of the Pariſh is by law required to ſubſcribe:—let me then aſk by what jeſuitical

ſophiſtry

ſophiſtry can it be proved, that the greater part of thoſe who execute this office are not *perjured* perſons? Nay, let me aſk ſomething more—are not the Clergy acceſſary to their crime? No.—In this *liberal* age, oaths and ſubſcriptions have ceaſed to be binding; and although a man is in the habit of tranſgreſſing literally every commandment of the decalogue, it is uncharitable to conclude that he is an immoral man, and not in the certain road to heaven.—*Heu pietas! Heu priſca fides!*

" Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit
" Nos nequiores, mox daturos
" Progeniem vitioſiorem." *Hor.*

Of the frivolous and unfounded objections uſually made to the infliction of penance, I cannot tranſgreſs upon the reader's patience by taking notice: ſuffice it to ſay, that there is none which would not obtain with equal force againſt penal laws in general. But the ſtrongeſt argument to be advanced in ſupport of the propriety of this wholeſome diſcipline, ariſes from an appeal to facts. For I am warranted in aſſerting, that wherever of late years a Clergyman has had the *courage* (and this requires a much larger ſhare of courage than would have been diſplayed by putting on a *red coat*) to exert his influence by prevailing upon the Church-wardens to perform their bounden duty, the moſt beneficial effects have uniformly been experienced, In a very large and populous pariſh in the Dioceſe of Exeter, where, upon an average of ſeveral years, eight or ten baſtards were born annually, and became chargeable to the poor-rate, this experiment was tried, and although a very conſiderable length of time has ſince elapſed, there has not yet been any occaſion to repeat the experiment. So that in this, as in moſt inſtances, intereſt is found eventually to coincide with duty. For the encouragement of Pariſh-officers it is proper to mention, that (ſtrange to ſay) the Proctor's Fees are *uncommonly reaſonable*, for the whole expences of preſenting a woman for baſtardy, do not exceed two pounds, twelve ſhillings, and ſixpence.

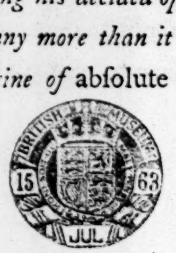
(DD) *Profaneneſs, immorality, and every kind of vice.*] Quære, Has the order for reading the King's Proclamation againſt Vice, Immorality, and Profaneneſs, four times every year in the Pariſh-churches, been yet recalled?—or has the ſtate of morals in this kingdom been changed ſo much for the better within the laſt twelve years, as to ſuperſede the neceſſity of this cuſtom? If not, how can any Clergyman reaſonably complain of the diſſoluteneſs and profligacy of his pariſhioners, while he himſelf (from a ſilly dread of the imputation of *ſingularity*) neglects to perform that part of his official duty, which is eminently calculated to ſuppreſs vice? When this and numberleſs other inſtances of unpardonable negligence are become general, need we feel the leaſt aſtoniſhment at the inſinuation lately thrown out by one, who has ruſhed foremoſt in the ranks, and ſounded with a louder blaſt than his fellows, the horn of battle, that we "are at eaſe in "Zion," only becauſe we are grown indifferent to her better intereſts?

(EE) *Our God.*] The Divinity of Chriſt is ſo clearly and incontrovertibly eſtabliſhed in the ſacred writings, that the Socinians, thoſe *ſoi-diſant* rational believers, who, while they deny every doctrine peculiar to the Chriſtian diſpenſation, have yet the effrontery to arrogate to themſelves, excluſively, the appellation of Unitarian Chriſtians, have for a long time paſt been driven from their ſtrong holds, and been compelled to have recourſe to the hackneyed ſubterfuge of interpolations, miſtakes of tranſcribers, and errors of the preſs. In purſuance of this practice, they pick and cull every text which makes againſt their ſyſtem of belief, if ſyſtem it can be called, and without the ſmalleſt heſitation pronounce it ſpurious. A remarkable inſtance of this ſtrange conduct was recently witneſſed in a pariſh in Devonſhire, where a zealous Diſſenting-teacher went round to the cottagers and requeſted them to let him look at their bibles; from which he tore out this leaf—blotted out that text—and ran through the other expreſſion—till at length he ſo irritated the poor peaſants, at his ill-treatment of a book, every word of which they had juſtly been taught to eſteem ſacred, that he utterly defeated his own object, and found it neceſſary to quit the neighbourhood.

POSTSCRIPT.

IT has long ſince been aſcertained, that there exiſts in this nation a well-diſciplined band of literary ruffians, who earn their livelihood by attacking all honeſt men, who, in theſe degenerate days, have the courage to tread the beaten track of their forefathers. Their weapons are ſharp, and their bows kept conſtantly bent, that they may privily ſhoot out their arrows, even bitter words at every unſuſpecting traveller in the paths of literature. They endeavour to blaſt his reputation, by inſinuating that ſomething is amiſs either in his head, or in his heart. He is ſure to be accounted either a fool or a knave—either an enthuſiaſt or a hypocrite—either a weak man or a mad man. And this is the treatment which every writer of common ſenſe and common honeſty muſt always expect to receive from the preſent banditti of infidels and jacobins, who, under the various characters of Reviewers—Pamphleteers—Satyrical Poetaſters—Regiſter-writers—Miſcellany-writers—Newſpaper-writers—and I know not how many other kinds of writers are enliſted in the cauſe of revolutionary principles, and are ſtraining every nerve to overthrow, and are practiſing every artifice to undermine the civil and religious eſtabliſhment of this kingdom. Should therefore any of the worn-out objections to the orthodox doctrines of our church, maintained in the preceding diſcourſe and illuſtrations—objections which have ſo repeatedly and ſo ably been anſwered by the defenders of that faith, which was once delivered to the Saints—ſhould any of theſe hackneyed objections be again raked up from the kennel of infidelity—the author will not feel himſelf called upon to enter the thorny field of controverſy; but truſts he ſhall always, with undaunted reſolution, go on his way rejoicing, well aſſured that the doctrine of the church, to which he belongs, is built upon that chief corner-ſtone—"the Rock of Ages"—and therefore that the gates of Hell will never eventually prevail againſt it.

He cannot refrain alſo from declaring his decided opinion that the Church of England is neither Calviniſtic nor Arminian, any more than it is Arian or Socinian:—it is not Calviniſtic becauſe it rejects the doctrine of abſolute unconditional *predeſtination:—*



it

it is not Arminian, becauſe it embraces the doctrine of original ſin, and maintains that obedience is inſeparable from faith. Upon this latter point Dr. Clarke's opinion is certainly accurate. He ſays, " The reaſon, why faith, (which is generally looked upon " as an act of underſtanding, and ſo not in our power) in the New Teſtament is always " inſiſted upon as a moral virtue, *is, becauſe faith in the ſcripture ſenſe, is not barely " an act of the underſtanding, but a mixed act of the will alſo, conſiſting very much " in that ſimplicity and unprejudicedneſs of mind, which our Saviour calls, receiving " the kingdom of God, as a little child, in that freedom from guile and deceit, which " was the character of Nathaniel, an Iſraelite in deed; and in that teachable diſpo- " ſition, and deſire to know the will of God, for which the Beræans were ſo highly " commended, who* ſearched the Scriptures daily whether theſe things were true." *This ſingle ſentence contains an ample refutation of every argument produced by Mr. Daubeny in ſupport of the contrary opinion.*

In regard to the foregoing diſcourſe, the author has certainly to apologiſe for its unuſual length, and deems himſelf bound in candour to confeſs, that, from motives of pure compaſſion, and a humane conſideration of the inclemency of the weather, as well as the ſhortneſs of the days, he was induced purpoſely to omit in the delivery, two or three of the leaſt important paragraphs. But had he prudently conſidered how very prevalent is the truly laudable taſte for ſeven and ten minute ſermons—ſermons, the whole excellence of which is generally compriſed in the text and the Gloria Patri—*he would have had reaſon to tremble at the probable diſguſt, which, even in its abridged ſtate, this enormous diſcourſe was likely to excite. It was remarked by Pope, that*

" Many by numbers judge a Poet's ſong,
" And ſmooth or rough, with them is right or wrong."

A ſimilar obſervation is applicable to the judgment commonly paſſed upon ſermons at the preſent day. A ſtop-watch is the moſt uſual criterion of the merit of a diſcourſe, which fails not to be condemned as an inſufferable bore, *if it exceed a certain number of minutes. But this is not the only criterion. The ſmoothneſs or roughneſs of the doctrine is another infallible teſt of excellence. For the taſte of moſt modern congregations preciſely*

ciſely coincides with that of the Jews in the days of Iſaiah. " Speak unto us ſmooth " things, propheſie deceits." *So that a rough ſermon of ten minutes length, is equally offenſive with a ſmooth ſermon of* fifty-five *minutes: but when length is combined with roughneſs, the effect frequently produced is much more ſtriking—the rankeſt infidels are compelled by the ſtings of conſcience to* quit the church in the midſt of ſervice.

☞ Since the preceding Notes and Illuſtrations were ſent to the Preſs, the following has appeared in the public papers:

HOUSE of COMMONS, *Monday, February 3d*, 1800.

" Mr. M. A. Taylor ſaid, that a diſgraceful innovation had crept in, no leſs " derogatory to the church than debaſing of religion; he alluded to the increaſing " number of licenced and field-preachers that ſwarmed in every part of the king- " dom, who, generally without talent, and always without qualifications, abuſed " the profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion, and ſetting themſelves up in oppoſition " to order, law, and decency, uſurped the province of the men fitly adapted for " it. Deſirous of remedying and removing ſuch ſcandalous abuſes in future, he " gave notice, that, at an early day, he would bring forward a motion for leave " to bring in a bill accordingly."

On the above I have but one obſervation to make, namely, that whoever oppoſes the principle of this bill, whatever may be his motives, will prove himſelf an *enemy* to his *Country*—an *enemy* to his *King*—an *enemy* to the *Church*—and an *enemy* to *God*.

FINIS.

Publiſhed by the ſame Author,

A SERMON,

PREACHED, BY PARTICULAR DESIRE,

IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF WILLAND, DEVON,

On THURSDAY the 7th Day of *February*, 1799,

AT THE INTERMENT OF

JOHN WESTCOTT, YEOMAN,

Who died of a melancholy Accident, in the Prime of Life.

TREWMAN AND SON, PRINTERS, EXETER.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
63
JUL